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MONASTIC POLITICS AND ROMAN PROCEDURE

A CLERICAL
DREYFUS CASE



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A CLERICAL DREYFUS CASE

With facsimiles of certain letters from the Abbot Eugene
Vachette of Melleray, France,
and from others.

By

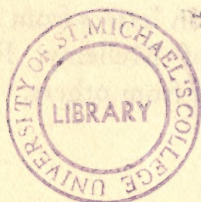
REV. FATHER ISIDORE B. MOONEY, O.C.R.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

THIS book does not deal even remotely with the Truths of Faith, nor does it prejudice the loyalty due from Catholics to the Pope. Its aim is especially to strike a blow against the abuse of a centralized system which enables officials and ecclesiastics in Rome to overrule unduly legitimate local authority in distant countries, and to show the necessity of having the aspirations and interests of other lands sufficiently represented and protected in the administrative government of the Church.

The scene of the story is at Mount Melleray in Ireland, at New Melleray in Iowa, in the United States, at the General Chapter of the Order in France, and at Rome with the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars: in all these places it reveals a persecution that has lasted several years.

The personal element seems to predominate to such an extent that it requires, perhaps, some explanation. But Father Mooney has never made this book personal, and if the narrative seems somewhat so, it is because his opponents compel him to recite in comprehensive detail the facts of the case. Indeed, it is only after a lengthened period of magnanimous patience that the story is given to the public for the first time.

If Father Mooney was a marked man from the time he entered the Monastery at Mount Melleray, it was mainly because, apart from the Abbot, it was felt that he was the only one, willing and able, to defend the Laws and Constitution of the Cistercian Order.

Of New Melleray, the author says: "The Monastery of New Melleray in America is an Irish institution, founded from and by Mount Melleray in Ireland, at the cost of many Irish lives and of much Irish labour, suffering and money. All the monks there are Irish and no Monastery in the Order has such rich possessions in lands as New Melleray. But a majority of French Abbots in the General Chapter set their hearts on getting this wealthy Monastery, with all its lands, for themselves, and for the monks of their own nationality. They had already passed a resolution in their General Chapter to take it from the Irish and give it to themselves."

This resolution, being contrary to the Laws and Constitution of the Order, was opposed successfully by the Abbot of Mount Melleray, who was supported and defended by Father Mooney. Here, then, we have one of the reasons for the persecution of both the Abbot and the Father. The Abbot died not long after, a broken-

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hearted man; Father Mooney still lives to carry on the fight; this book speaks for his courage and virility.

Keeping, then, in view, the act of the General Chapter of the Order in France, and the many and bitter attacks made on Father Mooney, the reader will see how impossible it was to avoid the personal nature of the narrative.

It will be seen that at the back of the General Chapter of the Order, encouraging the French monks in their designs on the rich heritage of New Melleray, was the party in Rome—the Ferrata-Guistini party—which, even now, in the October issue of the *Contemporary Review*, is attacking the former papal Secretary of State, His Eminence, Raphael, Cardinal Merry del Val.

That attack, an example of pure Italian diplomacy, is not likely to achieve its purpose; but it throws a little more light on the secret history of the constant abuse of ecclesiastical laws by Roman officials—as represented by the Ferrata-Guistini party—who, as will be seen, during the past decade prevented our case, among other things, going before the late Pope, by means of not only intercepting and changing documents, but by the usurpation of the prerogatives of the Roman Congregations; and now we find them trying, in the *Contemporary Review*, to make the former papal Secretary of State guilty of the very things they themselves have done.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to call attention to the facsimiles of remarkable letters and telegrams included in the book. One of the most important of the series is the letter from the Vicar-General of the Order, Abbot Eugene Vachette of Melleray in France. Abbot Eugene wrote two similar letters, one of which was sent to the Abbot of Mount Melleray who gave it to Father Mooney. As will be seen, the letter has been torn in pieces; this was done for its safe custody when it was thought the owner of the document was dying, but when he recovered the pieces were collected and pasted together as the facsimile shows.

Finally, one might say that the whole book forms a sort of syllogism; the introductory, constituting the major premise; the intervening chapters being the minor and the proofs thereof, and the conclusion showing the legitimate consequence flowing from them. The conclusion is, moreover, indubitable, because the premises from which it follows are true.

E. K. H.

October, 1914.

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APOLOGETIC AND INTRODUCTORY

I.

NECESSITY, it is often said, knows no law; and, at least, it sometimes justifies what might otherwise appear very reprehensible or even quite unpardonable. It is this sort of necessity, then, that obliges me to give to the world what, in other circumstances, I would gladly have left for ever unsaid and unpublished.

Though for nearly forty years I have been a priest and confessor without stain or reproach, and one who, during that time, had heard perhaps more confessions than any other clergyman of the Roman Catholic Church; yet by an odious system of secret calumny at Mount Melleray, encouraged and supported if not prompted and originated by officials from Rome, a stigma has been branded on my character and reputation, which has few, if any, parallels in the history of such things. And, as will be seen in the narrative, while I could open my lips to no one on the subject, all this has been, in some respects, almost as public and notorious and, in every respect, quite as injurious in my regard, and far more subtle and insidious in its evil effects, than if it had been given to the public press; for then it could have been easily met and refuted. Surely, therefore, such a stigma, in such circumstances, is one which I have a right and which I am bound, if I can possibly do so, to remove from my name and character, not only as an individual but particularly as a priest and confessor.

But it is not only possible for me to do so; it is also one of the easiest things in the world. This infamous brand they attempt to attach for ever to my name was from beginning, and still remains, a fraudulent one planned and designed at Mount Melleray, and then secretly worked out by fraud in Rome.

If, in fact, it must be attached to anyone, it is by no means to me, but to the men at Mount Melleray who tried to fix it on me, and to their accomplices that the guilt and shame that attaches to it must for ever belong. At every enquiry held, even by the judges whom they selected themselves, while I was proved and declared innocent of all and every charge and allegation these people brought against me, they themselves were over and over again found guilty and convicted of the very things with which they falsely charged me.

In the same way, the pretended verdict of the Holy See, which is used against me to brand this infamy on my name and character, is

an utterly false one, secretly obtained by means which reveal an unblushing system of fraud, in the office of the Abbot-General of the Cistercian Order in Rome, and in one of the Sacred Congregations there. This is what makes the case one of unparalleled interest, for my insignificance vanishes in the gravity of the matter and the importance of the issue.

The proofs that I give of all this are incontrovertible and overwhelming, leaving from beginning to end no room for doubt or question in the matter. So irresistible, in fact, are they that those involved have had to admit their absolute truth and their unanswerable force. Many, however, of the things proved, and of the ways in which they were effected, are of such a subtle nature and so unheard-of and extraordinary, revealing also so much fraud, where one would least expect it, that they demand fuller and clearer proofs than usual. These are the proofs, therefore, that I have been careful to supply in the narrative, leaving nothing open to doubt or speculation. Their own words and their own acts at Mount Melleray, and more particularly in Rome, prove the case for us over and over again. The difficulty of detecting them, therefore, only makes their guilt the greater; for it is such things which are so artfully done in the dark, under the guise of religion, that are always most pernicious and destructive, as well as most unjust and unjustifiable.

There are many reasons why I am enabled to give these extraordinary proofs. The first is that, in their over-confidence and imagined security, they thought themselves thoroughly safeguarded, for they had been long experienced in such things, and had the whole secret machinery in these matters under their absolute control. The men, therefore, in Rome and at Mount Melleray, from the very start, as will be seen, betrayed much of what they were doing in the belief that, in my circumstances and with my inexperience in matters of this kind, I could never bring their misdeeds to light, nor use them in any way, either to prove their guilty work at Mount Melleray, and establish my innocence of the charges they were bringing against me there, or to show the malice of the deceptive evidence they were using against me in their star-chamber conclaves in Rome. Then, when most of these things, having been detected in both places, were being used against them at the enquiries and trials that followed, and when they tried to screen what they had done and found it impossible, they were quite confounded. And in their confusion, the rest was dragged from them piece by piece, until in the end all came to light, revealing, particularly in Rome, a state of affairs which is perfectly astounding. I must further say that, when things were at their very worst, there were persons behind the screens, both at Mount

Melleray and at Rome, who were watching the machinery at work, and keeping us well informed of what was going on. So that practically all their doings, in both places, now stand fully revealed and will be clearly proved in the following pages.

This may be seen by merely turning to the synopsis of contents. But in the full narrative, as developed chapter after chapter, at every turn and in every detail down to the very end, and at the end particularly, all this will be exposed and laid bare; while my complete innocence will be fully established by a mass of evidence that nothing can withstand. It will have to be admitted by all, so that the men at Mount Melleray, who made the charges against me, will be found to have been themselves the real culprits throughout, and convicted at every trial and enquiry of the guilt of the very things with which they thought to brand me. In the same way, and with the same clearness and fullness of proof, the permanent officials of the Sacred Congregation and of the General's Office in Rome, who were co-operating with the men at Mount Melleray, out of their own lips, and with their own words, as well as by the clearest possible evidence, will have to be bracketed with them, as their accomplices throughout the whole business, and convicted moreover of being guilty of the most glaring falsification of documents, and of various forgeries, all secretly perpetrated in their official capacities, in order to affix for ever the public brand of infamy on me.

Finally, as a crowning climax, when they are all fully detected and convicted of this, in order to screen it from the world, though proved and declared, but in secret only, to be absolutely innocent, I am publicly branded by them as a criminal, and sentenced to be exiled and imprisoned for life, under the false and ridiculous pretence that these things are done "for the sake of peace" and that they have the right and power of doing them, merely because they say privately to me that they do not intend to punish me or declare me guilty. Surely, in these circumstances, the legal right, and the necessity that justify me in defending my liberty and in clearing my character, are fully established and proved, particularly as the narrative will show that there was no other remedy either civil or ecclesiastic.

This is my justification for making public what I do in the following pages. But it is by no means my sole or principal motive for doing it. Indeed, were I merely to consult my personal feelings or allow selfish motives only to influence me in the matter, I would never publish one word of what I do; for I know well and feel bitterly how much it must cost me. My governing motive, in fact, is to expose the corrupt system we shall see operating throughout, in order, thereby,

to put a stop to the unjust and vindictive things, which, under cover of this system, we shall see done even in the highest places in the Church, and done in the name of the Church itself, and under the false guise of religion.

II

It may be said, however, that this is not a matter that should be brought before a scoffing public; that a remedy should be sought elsewhere and otherwise. As all those who know anything about the case are well aware, and as the narrative itself will sufficiently prove, this is an argument that long weighed with myself; until, in my endeavours to obtain some redress and get things set right, I put it to the test everywhere, and by all possible means, indeed by means that would seem an impossibility to most people. When I had exhausted every other means I made my way to Rome, as will be seen in the concluding chapters, under difficulties that were almost insurmountable. After vainly seeking there from those who had done me the great wrong, or who were now responsible for it, the redress to which, as all had to admit, I had an indubitable right, I finally endeavoured to get an appeal for justice and redress forwarded to the Pope. But I might as well have attempted to sail to the fixed stars, as to approach His Holiness, or get any true information on the subject, or any appeal or supplication whatever, regarding the case forwarded to him. The men in Rome who had done me the wrong, aided by their associates there, had every possible avenue to justice or redress, even through the Pope, barred and bolted and doubly locked against me. In Rome then, or elsewhere, there was no remedy—none in the world; for as the facts will prove, the permanent officials in Rome will do anything to shield one another from detection or exposure by any outsider. Thus, all my endeavours to obtain redress only revealed at every fresh turn a well-guarded system of deeper, more treacherous, and more impenetrable redtapeism, operating everywhere to effect my utter ruin, and prevent me from ever obtaining any redress whatever.

But there is another aspect of the case, which here demands a word of explanation. There is a divine and a human element in religion. Its divine element no one believes in, venerates, and clings to more firmly than I do. But, when men in Rome, though they be Cardinals and Monsignors, or Abbots General and their Secretaries, for selfish or other unworthy human motives, step outside and altogether beyond their jurisdiction and authority, in order to commit, even in the name of religion and the Church, unjust and un-

lawful acts, destructive of religion and charity, and grossly and inhumanly cruel and unjust to their fellow men, the circumstances are essentially changed; and this we know, changes the very nature of cases. When this sort of thing has grown, and hardened, as every one who is experienced in the matter knows, into a system that is working ruin to the Church and to religion in many lands, and cruel misery and wrong to many a helpless victim—sometimes, and even often, causing those who otherwise would love and venerate their Church to lose all faith; when those, who are doing these things insidiously and deceitfully seek to shelter their unlawful misdeeds that are causing so much evil, behind the name and authority of the Church and religion, thus themselves treating both with contempt, and when there is no other earthly remedy for all this, but to let in a little more of the light of public opinion, in order to effect justice and remedy the great evil, surely to do so cannot be wrong.

This manifest right of exposing the wrong is particularly so in a case like the present, where these men themselves have so little scruple in unjustly and vindictively branding others with infamy, and holding them up for ever to public contempt, even when they must themselves declare the innocence of their victims. These are the things which, even out of their own lips, we shall see them repeatedly convicted of doing; and this is what makes the revelations contained in the following pages absolutely unique and overwhelming in their importance.

III

ONE further word to the reader. I have said that the facts of the case, and the proofs of them that are given in the following chapters—for nothing is left unproven—are most extraordinary. Indeed, in many ways, they seem stranger than even fiction itself. But they are very different from fiction, and, in many respects, far more difficult to deal with. The inventor of fiction can, with artistic skill, change and vary his imaginary facts and their circumstances and surroundings in order to give them a greater air of reality and verisimilitude. Here, on the contrary, the narrative must above all things adhere to strict and invariable truth, and to real facts as they have occurred. It must endeavour also to depict them as they have really happened; while it is only when we get a full view, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome, behind the curtains in the case, that their real magnitude, and their nature, meaning and purpose become fully manifest.

The true facts, therefore, and the proofs of them must often be laboriously unearthed and dragged into the light of day from the

obscurity in which they had been deliberately wrapped up and hidden away to conceal the origin and intent of the evil work, and who they are that were doing and encouraging it. Then, again, they must be freed from the embarrassing entanglements, in which they have been cunningly and skilfully involved, to prevent detection and exposure. And while all this difficult and complicated operation of bringing them and all that concerns them into light has been going on at Mount Melleray in Ireland, it is necessary to turn to Rome, or to the General Chapter of the Order in France, in order to prove there, also, the falsehood that has been at work, and that underlies what has been going on in the business at Mount Melleray and elsewhere.

But after all this has been repeatedly done at Rome and at the General Chapter of the Order in France, when you turn again to Mount Melleray to review your facts which before seemed so real and palpable, you find that, like Puck in the fairy tale, they have been transformed altogether, and that, in their stead, there is something still worse at the same evil work; while the old calumnies, and the old slanders, which had been branded as so false at Mount Melleray and in Rome, are reappearing in many parts of Ireland and elsewhere, where they cannot be detected and refuted; and reappearing often under even more vicious and more insidious forms than before. And again, if you turn to the General Chapter and to Rome you find the same agents at work under other new, and far more deceptive and dishonest, guises and devices. So that you might almost as well think to catch and confine a whole scattered regiment of mocking and grinning, but quickly vanishing, shadows as to follow them separately and individually in these different places.

These are the sorts of calumnies, slanders and accusations that we have to deal with, and this is what will be found and proved to have been going on for years, and running through the whole case in its varying phases at Mount Melleray and in Rome, as well as at the General Chapter of the Order in France. This, then, is another difficulty that we have to encounter in our task. But even passing and changing shadows, of this kind particularly, can sometimes be photographed and catalogued. This is what we did very carefully at Mount Melleray in the many exhaustive and searching enquiries and sworn investigations into the occurrences that took place there, as they will be detailed in the first part of the narrative, proving at the same time that every one of the calumnies, slanders and charges made against me was false and malicious, without even a shadow of excuse, and that it was my accusers who were the origina-

tors and first propagators of them. We proved also that, while they were found guilty themselves of the very things with which they charged me, their constant boast was that, when the opportune time came, they could get me punished in Rome for these very things for which they were themselves condemned.

Thus branded and catalogued, as these false charges and slanders were at Mount Melleray, no matter how they might try to disguise them in Rome and at the General Chapter in France, or anywhere else, there was little difficulty in detecting and exposing them as we did, and in exposing also the conduct of the men at Rome or at the General Chapter in France who, though knowing what these calumnies and slanders were, and with full proof of it before their own eyes, yet, until they too were detected at it, and convicted of it, used them against me, as if they were real and genuine proofs of my guilt.

This explains how the first set of difficulties was overcome, but it also brings us to another that was still more treacherous; because it was one that was even more secret, more subtle, and more insidious than the first, and in some respects even beyond the reach of detection. This was the Star Chamber system which was used against me in Rome with all its treacherous technicalities, formalities and redtapeism, so unintelligible to inexperienced outsiders; to which must be added the gross irregularities and illegalities which the men there practised, to prevent the truth from coming to light, and to enable them to use in secrecy and in safety every sort of false evidence to make me appear guilty.

I have already somewhat indicated how this difficulty was met, and how the men in Rome were detected and convicted. But, as above stated, it is the narrative itself and the facts it reveals which will make this perfectly manifest. It suffices here to say that it is their own deeds, their own words, and their own writings that will convict them.

In order then to appreciate the guilt of what, from the very beginning, was going on at Mount Melleray, and the meaning of the calumnies that were spread from it, the reader throughout must keep clearly before his mind the end and object these men at Mount Melleray had in view in all this; which was to secure my conviction in Rome through the means we shall see their accomplices there using. We shall even find that this is proclaimed by them almost from the start, so that the reader can have no doubt about it.

The subject then divides itself into two main sections, the first being what was done at Mount Melleray and the object and motives of it. The second exposes and proves what occurred in Rome, and at the General Chapter of the Order in France and how, and why,

and by whom it was done there. This second part especially, while showing, still more clearly, the real object of all that was done at Mount Melleray, reveals many astounding things regarding the Roman Congregations that have never before been brought to light.

Now these two sections of our subject, namely, what occurred at Mount Melleray and what was done in Rome, are so interdependent on one another, that neither of them could be at all adequately comprehended, nor its significance and importance sufficiently realized, without at least some antecedent knowledge of the other.

It is like the incident of the man seen descending the declivity with the gun under his arm. This might indeed be a very innocent and unimportant matter. But it would become a very different affair when discovered and proved that he was on the way to assist a body of conspirators in some deed of blood in the valley below, and that his was the weapon with which the murder was perpetrated. Thus, no one could ever imagine what could be the real motives, and the aim and object of the things we shall see done and said at Mount Melleray, without knowing something of the treacherous use that was being secretly made of them in Rome. In the same way, no one could form anything like an adequate idea of the things done in Rome in connexion with the case, or how, and by what agencies they were effected, without knowing something of the practices carried on at Mount Melleray and from it, in order to enable them to do these things in Rome. Each of them affords the necessary supplement and explanation of the other. Fortunately, however, we are enabled to give, at quite an early stage in our narrative, a letter from the Vicar-General of the Order, Abbot Eugene Vachette of the Monastery of Melleray in France, who knew most of what was going on in both places. This letter will sufficiently supply the light and leading required, in order to enable the reader to understand what passes in review before him as he proceeds, and to form some idea of its meaning and purpose. He can hardly, however, fully and adequately realize the exceeding enormity of it all, until he sees the whole facts laid bare and developed at the trials in Rome in 1904 and 1905, and again in 1907 and 1908. Much of what occurred on these occasions in Rome would certainly stagger human credibility were the facts not so fully proven and so plain and manifest before the reader's eyes. At the same time, it was these extraordinary proceedings in Rome that have made it so absolutely necessary for me to detail, more fully indeed than I might otherwise have desired, what occurred from the beginning at Mount Melleray. When he comes to these trials in Rome, the reader will easily see this, too, for himself.

MONASTIC POLITICS AT MOUNT MELLERAY

CHAPTER I

I

I HAD been a secular priest for eighteen years in the Arch-diocese of Armagh under the late Primate of all Ireland, the most Rev. Dr McGettigan, and the present Primate, His Eminence Cardinal Logue. In 1893 I entered the Monastery of Mount Melleray, in Ireland, and after a novitiate of two years, I made my simple vows as a religious of the Order. My solemn vows, in accordance with the rules of the Order, were made three years later, in 1898.

With regard to my life as a secular priest, my ecclesiastical superiors, His Eminence Cardinal Logue and Monsignor Byrne, Dean and Vicar-General of Armagh, have testified that I gave up my mission in Armagh of my own free will, with the view of seeking admission as a postulant in the Monastery of Mount Melleray, and that, while a secular priest, I had always been a very active missionary, an exemplary priest, and an edifying ecclesiastic; Monsignor Byrne testifying that he had known me to be such from my ordination, while Cardinal Logue had only known me for a few years. Their letters testifying this will be produced.

I now come to my novitiate and my simple profession in Mount Melleray. After two years noviceship, and before solemn profession, the votes of the professed members of the community, who are in Holy Orders, are taken in Chapter as to whether the novice is to be admitted as a professed member of the community or not. Before the votes are taken, however, the members voting are asked if they know any reason why the novice should not be admitted into the community as a professed member; the Master of Novices being specially interrogated about the novice's dispositions, character and conduct. On this occasion, with two exceptions, all the members of the Chapter—especially the Novice Master, testified in the highest degree to my conduct, character and dispositions. The two who were opposing me alleged, however, that Brother Paul, the doctor's assistant, who, after the Novice Master, had most opportunities of observing me, had stated that I was insane, and had said also that he knew this from his own observations and from what he had seen of me, as well as from what the doctor had told him. This shocked and

astonished the other members of the Chapter, for they did not believe a word of it, particularly coming from the source it did. The members, therefore, unanimously demanded—a thing never before done in such cases—that Brother Paul and the doctor should be brought into the Chapter Room, and examined in their presence on the subject, and the meeting was postponed for this purpose.

The two who made the charge then went in private to the Abbot, and retracted the allegation of my insanity, saying that Brother Paul's statement must have been made only by way of jest, and begging the Abbot not to allow Brother Paul and the doctor to be examined in Chapter. They said their examination would only cause scandal and ill-feeling in the community. This they said to the Abbot in private; but, the matter being decided by vote of the Chapter, he had no power to overrule that vote; so that the witnesses had to be publicly examined before the members, particularly as the voters still demanded it, and insisted on it. Then Brother Paul in Chapter, and in presence of all the voters, testified that he had never, in jest or otherwise, said any such thing about me, nor anything like it, either to the person who stated he had done so, or to anyone in the world; that the whole story was an unfounded fabrication, and that, so far as he was concerned, what they alleged about me was utterly groundless and without a shadow of justification or excuse; that, on the contrary, he had always considered me, and spoken of me, as one of the soundest-minded men in the Monastery.

The doctor, who was a professed member of the community, testified the same, adding that he had always looked on me, as "a living rock of common sense."

Neither then nor for thirteen years after did I know, or in the least suspect, what had secretly gone on against me on this occasion, for these things are always done in absolute secrecy. Probably I should never have heard or known anything at all about it; only that, twelve years afterwards, among a number of other false charges, they renewed it before the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, a sort of ecclesiastical tribunal in Rome which often decided such cases in secret. At Rome, in 1907 and 1908, they sought to have me condemned in secret by this tribunal; and owing to influence there, they would have succeeded, in perfect secrecy and security, in achieving their designs against me, only that, there again, by a happy chance, their plot was brought to light. It was then, in 1908, that a number of priests who had been present in the Chapter Room at this affair, in 1895, on the occasion of my profession at Mount Melleray, swore as detailed above, to the proven and admitted falsehood of these charges and allegations that my

two secret accusers had made against me at my profession. This incident, then, may be said to be the beginning, or at least the first detected manifestation, of a long and well-planned campaign of groundless denunciations and accusations, continuously carried on against me from Mount Melleray, and backed up in Rome by a secret system of the most astounding plotting and intriguing that could be imagined.

Starting from this point, then, the following chapters will show clearly how this campaign was secretly worked up, and unremittingly carried on, for thirteen years, at Mount Melleray and in Rome. They will also show the extraordinary ways and means adopted to carry the intrigue through to a successful finish, as, perhaps, such things have never before been exposed.

II

THAT the reader may the better understand how this campaign was worked up and carried on, and that he may more clearly comprehend and justly appreciate what follows, a few words must be here said about one or two of the rules and regulations of the Cistercian, or Trappist Order, as it is commonly called, and how they were observed by a section of the monks at Mount Melleray.

The Cistercian Rule of Life imposes on all its members the very strictest observance of silence, and of secluded retirement from the distractions of the world outside, in order that they may give themselves, wholly and without reserve, to a constant recollection, as far as human frailty allows, of the Divine Presence, not only at Mass, at the Divine Office, and at prayer and meditation, but also at their daily labours. This last is the main object of the rule of silence, hence their chief motto is, that to labour is to pray, "*Laborare est orare.*"

These rules and regulations have their origin and foundation in the great work of St Benedict, commonly known as "*The Holy Rule.*" Coming down through the centuries, expounded and explained by St Stephen Hardinge, St Bernard and other great saints and lights of the Order, they have, with additions or modifications to suit the different ages, been republished times beyond number, but always remaining in substance the same. So late as the year 1894, the year immediately preceding my profession, they were again revised and republished with the changes or modifications which the times and circumstances demanded. This revision and republication, in 1894, was carried out by the Abbots of the General Chapter

of the Order, at the suggestion or command, and with the approval and confirmation of, the then Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII. They, therefore, contain nothing redundant, or obsolete and out of date; but are strictly binding on every member of the Order without exception, unless where lawful dispensation is granted.

As then republished, here are the words of the Constitutions of the Order, in which it enjoins on all this silence and retirement:—"As nothing contributes more to preserve the discipline of our Order than the observance of silence, according to our rule, therefore no conversation is permitted to us, not even for the sake of recreation. When the brethren meet one another let them salute in silence. And with persons of the outside world—no matter who they may be—they must not converse or speak at all without permission from their own superiors."

In further explanation of these rules, the regulations of the Order, as published at the same time, lay down as follows:—"The monks must hold no conversation whatever with one another, either by word or even by writing. When they have anything useful to communicate let them do it by signs. All noises with the mouth, although inarticulate, and even signs that are useless, are forbidden." This shows how strict is the rule of silence, even among the Brethren.

But it is far more strict as regards the outside public. Though speaking between the brethren, in certain specified cases of urgent necessity, is permitted, as an implied permission on the part of the superior is then supposed to exist; yet, unless there be an express permission, it is, in every case, absolutely and rigorously forbidden as regards outsiders, whether guests, casual visitors, or anyone who may happen to be employed at the monastery. The regulations say:—"No one should ever speak to domestics, guests or strangers without the express permission of the superior. In their presence, we even avoid speaking or making signs."

Though, at first sight, this might seem too rigorous, and calculated to convey to the stranger an impression of rudeness on the part of the monk, whether priest or lay brother; in the end, however, the example teaches a lesson of self-restraint, obedience and fidelity to their rule, which pleases and edifies every one. While, on the contrary, the unvarying experience of every age and every country teaches us that violation of the rules of silence and retirement, and particularly undue intercourse with the outside world, are the main chinks through which relaxation of discipline, irregularities, and even graver disorders creep into the monastic enclosure itself and end by destroying its spirit of religion.

To prevent, then, all distracting intercourse with the outside

world, and the better, thereby, to safeguard these rules of silence, retirement and recollection, all that the members of the community require is amply provided within the enclosure of the monastery; while there is a simple system of signs, well understood by all the brethren, by which among themselves they can, in things necessary and useful, communicate with one another without any interruption of the rule of silence. This system of signs is the same in every country, and the rules and regulations are likewise the same everywhere throughout the monasteries of the Order. As a consequence of these rules, that are so binding, and so essential to monastic life, except the abbot himself, or whoever for the time being may be first superior, none, without special permission, can communicate in any way with outsiders; nor, save in a few specified cases or by signs only, even with the members of the community.

III

BUT besides the ordinary concomitants of some of the other monasteries, there are at Mount Melleray a public church, a ladies' lodging house and a shop. There are also a college and schools, with some other things not usually found at such places. Moreover, during the summer months particularly, Mount Melleray is frequented by vast numbers of visitors of both sexes. In addition to those coming to such places from religious motives, these crowds of visitors at Mount Melleray are largely composed of tourists, pleasure-seekers and others of the same class, and they are from almost every part of the world. Some of these visitors stop only for the day, but many of them remain for a number of days, and others even for a fortnight or three weeks. While the gentlemen who stop for some time at Mount Melleray remain within the enclosure of the Monastery in comparatively secluded retirement; the many casual visitors and all the ladies, even those who remain for a considerable time, spend their leisure hours for the most part with the brothers at the lodge or shop, or in visiting college and schools and the other places that are open to them. As may be easily seen, from the rules quoted above all this demanded at Mount Melleray a more than ordinary diligence and care for the faithful observance of silence and retirement on the part of the members of the community; because the worldly distractions, and the dangers of violating the rules, and thereby introducing disorder and giving disedification to the visitors, were greatly increased; while we have seen that the avoidance of these very things are essentials of the monastic life. Indeed, the very names of monk and monastery imply all this.

In the early years of the Monastery, this was fully recognized at Mount Melleray, particularly by the monks, who, before they came back to Ireland, had been trained in the ways of the continental monasteries, for Mount Melleray was founded by Irish monks trained in the monasteries of France. The practice of recollection and silence was most carefully observed by these first monks, even when their duties brought them into close and constant contact with people from the outside world. Many of them had been soldiers under Napoleon in their youth, and understood well what discipline meant.

But since 1833, when the Monastery of Mount Melleray was founded, three or four generations of monks had passed away; and, even from an early date, with each succeeding generation, this diligence and care had been gradually relaxing. Every generation had a freer intercourse with visitors, and especially with the people from the neighbourhood, who frequented the Monastery. Then many acquaintances, with intimate relations and close friendships, began to be formed between some of these monks and the people coming to visit them at the Monastery. Year after year, the evil went on ever increasing and spreading, and always taking deeper roots. In the end, those engaged at the college and the schools, and at the shop and lodge, and even some of the confessors of the church were constantly meeting and holding conversations with outsiders, as if, for them, there were no rules of silence at all, and no monastic obligation of seclusion and retirement. Some of those teaching at the college, or pretending to teach there had, in fact, spent almost their whole monastic lives at this, and had formed intimate associations and close acquaintances with nearly every one that came to the place; while they had numerous circles of more intimate friends or relatives of their own, who were mostly from the diocese of Waterford, in which the Monastery was situated, or from the adjoining counties of Cork and Tipperary. These last were constantly coming and going on their visits to their friends at the Monastery, and were bringing them all the news and gossip of the neighbourhood, and even whatever scandals they could gather for them from far and near. They were also carrying away with them from the Monastery all sorts of stories; and these stories were too often far from truthful, and very unfavourable and unjust to members of the community inside, who could not defend themselves, because they were trying to observe faithfully their rules of silence and retirement. This soon led to a great deal of irregularity and disorder at the Monastery, and sometimes to bitter feelings in the community.

At the Visitations that were made, and the investigations that

were held into these matters, innumerable attempts from time to time were made to put a stop to this. But these attempts at reform were all frustrated in the end, for the Monastery might be said to be now encircled by this sort of thing; so that, if it were stopped for a time in one place, it broke out in another, and was soon again everywhere at work.

Then, as time went on, these outside monks, as we may now call them, began to talk and converse with one another at the college, as well as with the visitors; pretending that the nature of their duties necessitated this also. And, by degrees, they brought the same habit into the community; so that there were places in the Monastery where you could almost always find two or three of them in conversation when they were not otherwise engaged with the seculars outside. There were thus two sets of monks in the Monastery, as different from one another as anything well could be; those engaged outside as described, and those inside who never conversed or held communications with anyone, and who were living in perfect seclusion and retirement, as the rule required that all should do.

But there was another great evil that sprang out of this, and grew up side by side with it; for these things seldom come alone in a monastery. They usually bring many other evils in their train. Though the members of the community at Mount Melleray come from every part of Ireland, those connected with the counties of Waterford, Cork and Tipperary, the three adjoining counties, managed by degrees to secure almost all the positions outside for themselves and their special friends; so that, in addition to its other evils, it thus grew into a very selfish and narrow-minded local faction. Many, however, from these counties, who continued to observe the rule of silence and insisted that others should do the same were, like those from the remoter parts, very soon compelled to give up their positions outside, on account of the manner in which they were worried by the false stories spread abroad about them, by those who frequented the college and the Monastery. All this had generated some very bad feelings and a dangerous spirit of faction among some of the members of the community.

Though I then knew nothing of it, this was the state of affairs at Mount Melleray when I made my profession there in 1895. It was mainly out of this also that the opposition of the two monks on that occasion had sprung, for the Abbot has testified that both of them knew that, very much against my own inclinations, I was to be appointed to a position in the secular church outside, which they considered their own by a kind of prescriptive right; and where, moreover, I was very unlikely to fall into their line of thinking and

acting, particularly with regard to their intercourse with the world outside. But there were other hidden reasons for their opposition which will appear more clearly as we proceed.

CHAPTER II

I

THOUGH having, on the occasion of my profession, to retract and express a feigned sorrow for the great wrong they had done, my two opponents were far from being changed. On the contrary, embittered by the exposure and defeat they had suffered, they redoubled their efforts, extending their plans of attack, and seeking every opportunity that lay within their reach to organize against me a party and a cabal, both in the community and around the Monastery; so as to drive me out of it, or make life for me in it an impossibility.

There was one of them, particularly, who was constantly on the watch for these opportunities, and doing his utmost to miss none of them. Nor were opportunities wanting to him, for he was one of those who held the most unrestrained intercourse with members of the community, and with the visitors of every class, especially the priests and people of the neighbourhood. He had, therefore, plenty of opportunities; and where the opportunities did not arise in the ordinary course of things, he made them for himself. Sometimes however, they did arise, and here was one great opportunity, and perhaps the first of any serious importance.

Shortly after my simple profession, I was appointed confessor in the public church at the Monastery, where immense numbers of all classes of people came for confession. Before my appointment, there was one of the confessors to whom nearly all the respectable penitents had gone for confession; and, for a considerable time at first, I heard few confessions except those of the labouring and farming classes from the immediate neighbourhood, sending the more respectable penitents to that confessor. I did this mainly because I then considered him more experienced, and in many ways better suited than I was for hearing the confessions of such people, and I told them so. After some time, however, nearly all the penitents that used to go to him, thinking otherwise, insisted on coming to confession to me, though I still tried all in my power to get them to go back to him, and for two or three years I continued to do this.

Nevertheless, as time went on, scarcely any of these respectable

people, who were mostly ladies from the remoter parts of Ireland or from abroad, would go any longer to confession to him; and fewer still to another confessor, who, a short time after me, had also been appointed to hear confessions in the public church. Both of these Fathers had travelled much in foreign countries, and, at least, pretended to have mixed a great deal with refined and educated people. They held that they were therefore specially qualified as confessors for such people, and that all the penitents of that class should go, or should be sent, to confession to themselves. But this getting abroad, instead of attracting these respectable people, completely repelled them, so that scarcely any of them would now go near either of these confessors. And the other confessors not being very regular in their attendance, they all came to confession to me, though I still endeavoured to make them go to the others.

That these penitents were coming to me excited extreme jealousy and opposition on the part of both these confessors. And though I knew nothing about it for a long time, their whole endeavours, as will be seen from what follows, were now bent on having me removed from the confessional, and, if possible, from the Monastery. They evidently thought they could easily do this, because I was an unknown stranger from a remote part of the country; and they were local men, supported by the local faction at the Monastery, and with relatives or connexions in the community and all round the place. Moreover, as I had been a secular priest, they represented it as an insufferable reflection on the Monastery and on the Fathers of the community that anyone who had been a mere secular priest should be the principal confessor at Mount Melleray. They were, therefore, on these and other grounds, trying to organize a party hostile to me in the community as well as among a section of the public frequenting the Monastery. They could, however, effect very little themselves in this way; for, save with a few of the local factionists, they had no influence of any weight in the community, while every one outside saw the cause of their jealousy and opposition to me.

Here, however, was the opportunity that my chief opponent was seeking, so he joined these two confessors, or rather made use of them to forward his own designs. They were soon able, therefore, to get together against me a few more, though as yet very few, of the members of the community, and also a few of the visitors from the immediate neighbourhood. Thus, by degrees, the opposition was growing and gathering strength, while I knew nothing until long after about what was going on. Like the incident that occurred at my profession as well as much that follows, it

was others, as will be seen, who proved all this at the various investigations that followed at Mount Melleray and at the trials regarding these matters that took place afterwards in Rome.

Though they had now got a few more to join them, they were not as yet able to use any of the members of the community against me as a confessor in the church. The reason of this was that, among the monks who communicated with seculars, there were at the Monastery two opposing parties, known as "The Tipperary Men" and "The Cork Men." Neither faction, therefore, dare attempt to use those that belonged to the opposition camp, because these might expose what they were doing; nor could they use any of the true and upright monks who tried in everything to observe the rules of the Order, and to act according to their consciences. This, it appears, for a long time saved me, for it prevented them from being able to carry out their designs and plans against me in the church where the confessions were heard; because the Brother who was there would do nothing for them that he believed wrong. Their next move, therefore, was to have this Brother, and all who, like him, would not co-operate with them, removed from the positions they filled outside, and to have appointed, in their stead, others who would help to forward their plans and attacks on me, and on those coming to confession to me.

II

THAT all this, as well as much of what follows, may be understood, a few words must be here said about the monastic politics of Mount Melleray; for, even at the Monastery, there were unfortunately politics, and politics of the narrowest, bitterest and most selfish description. It is true indeed that, in ordinary circumstances, there would be no occasion and no opportunity for such things in a Trappist Monastery. But at Mount Melleray they are commenced at the college by the monks employed there; who, as we have seen, contrary to the rules and regulations of the Order, are constantly conversing with each other, or with visitors from the outside, and, too often, planning and plotting against any of the brethren inside who may happen to be an object of aversion to them. From the college, then, these politics are brought into the Monastery by those who are seeking through them to obtain power, place and importance in the monastic community, and, thereby, to appear great and important outside, in the eyes of their worldly friends and relatives.

This game of politics begins to be learned by the students at the college, and most of those who enter the Monastery are well versed

in the political game, even before they enter the Monastery at all; while these political novices, who come from the college, enter the Monastery for the most part, in order to get out again to teach at the college, or to get some other important position, where they will be in touch with the world outside. In the monastic life it is their unhappy ambition in this respect that destroys the peace and charity of the community.

But to return to the politics. At the college and in the Monastery, the lines of division, and the questions that separate the two political parties, are purely local and personal; those from Cork and the parts of Waterford that border it are generally on the one side, and those from Tipperary and the portion of Waterford adjoining thereto on the other. But many even of the monks who come from these counties, being faithful to the spirit and rule of their Order, will have nothing to do with this destructive game of party politics. It is generally confined to those engaged at the college or elsewhere outside, and to the confessors in the public church, with a few others, particularly young monks who want to shine before the world, and are on the outlook for promotion, and positions at the Monastery.

As the ends and objects of these political monks are, as I have said, purely and solely selfish, the rival leaders will often conspire together and form coalitions and combinations, uniting into one body all the followers and partisans on both sides, in order to attain the selfish purposes the leaders and followers have in view.

This is what occurred in 1898. A coalition of both political factions was then formed by the person opposing me so bitterly ever since his exposure at my profession. The coalition on this occasion was composed mainly of those employed at the college with a few others added to their number, particularly the two confessors who were opposed to me, who were supposed to represent respectively the Cork and Tipperary sections of the combination, while the leader represented the Waterford wing of the new party.

Though I was still quite ignorant of it all, it was, therefore, quite plain to most of those in the knowledge of such things at the Monastery that the combination in all its ramifications was to be used mainly against me. This led many who were friendly to me to drop away from it, though they had been a good deal mixed up with that sort of thing before. But, on the other hand, there were others who, though most friendly to me, and opposed to such political intrigues and combinations, yet had to join them, or rather to pretend that they joined them, in order to hold on to the positions they held. For any who did not now join, or at least pretend to do so, were attacked almost as bitterly as myself; unless, indeed, they had

secular friends and connexions near the Monastery of whom the party was afraid. In a few cases this last did occur.

But, from the start of this new combination, there was specially brought into it another element that was perhaps the most pernicious of all. This was a number of priests from the outside, who, for the most part, belonged to the diocese of Waterford.

Until very recently, almost all the priests of that diocese and some from Cork and Tipperary had made their preparatory studies at Mount Melleray, and had, when there, taken part, more or less, in these political intrigues and combinations. To a certain extent, therefore, they knew all about them, but they were not permitted to know all that lay behind them; nor that the political game was often being played by the intriguing monks to crush and torture one or other of their helpless brethren inside. Many of these priests, as old students of the place, were still constantly visiting at the college and Monastery; some of them coming two or three times a week, and some at certain periods almost every day. They were received and entertained there by the intriguing monks, their old companions of college days, and these monks could make them do almost anything they chose. This was particularly so with regard to my chief opponent; for, during their student days and ever since, he, being in a position to do so, had been heaping benefits and favours on them from the Monastery, until he had almost every priest in the diocese of Waterford at his beck, to do for him whatever he desired.

To these, as completing the now militant force of the new combination, we must also add a considerable number of the more intimate associates, and other lay friends and connexions, of one or other of the political monks. Few of these last, however, had any clear knowledge of what the programme was, nor of what the monks were aiming at. Most of them were women or girls from the counties of Cork and Waterford, with a few from Tipperary; and they were merely requisitioned to aid in carrying out the new campaign, without being initiated into any of its more recondite secrets. How bravely some of them did their parts will, however, be seen as we proceed.

III

IN their political platform there were two main planks. One was to put the Abbot down and take the mitre off his head for one of their leaders, and then, through him as Abbot, to secure for themselves and their friends control over the riches and revenues of the Monastery and every position of importance in and around it. The

other was to have me removed from the position of confessor, and one of themselves appointed instead, for I was the only non-politician who occupied any position of much importance outside.

The leaders now expounded their programme to their more intimate followers, and sought to win supporters for it, inside the Monastery mainly through the medium of the theology class, where one of them was teaching, and where a good many of them met, and outside through the college and those who were employed at it. At the same time, in both places, their followers were assured that, at the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation in Rome, the leaders could easily, with money and influence, get that programme carried out to its full extent. Indeed, so sure were they all of succeeding in their designs against the Abbot, that they were constantly discussing the positions each of them would have under the new régime, when they got control of the Monastery.

The principal cause or pretext of their opposition to the Abbot was that he was now making strenuous efforts to correct the abuses of their dangerous and unedifying intercourse with seculars, particularly with women and girls in the grounds of the college, and in its corridors and classrooms, as well as in the private rooms and parlours of the lodge and at the shop, and in other places around the Monastery, where they used to meet; and also that he had already forbidden the confessors and all others employed in the church to hold conversations with anybody there or elsewhere. All this they held was in violation of their prescriptive rights, as it had been going on so long without being seriously and effectively interfered with. They were assured by those who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations so well that, through the above-mentioned influence which some of them had there, they could get him deposed from his abbacy. The Abbot, it would seem, for a long time knew nothing about the full extent of the conspiracy and combination against himself; just as for a long time I knew nothing about what was going on against me, or, at least, did not understand what it meant, nor know who they were that were getting these things done.

As I have already said, the other plank of the common platform, which the now combined rival leaders adopted, was to have me removed from the confessional and from the Monastery; falsely alleging as a reason for it that it was I who was supplying the Abbot with the information about the monks and the women and girls at the lodge and the college, and that I had the knowledge of these things from the confessions I heard. We shall find this proved later on, particularly at a sworn enquiry held by the Bishop of Waterford in 1904. This false cry was got up and spread abroad to deceive and

embitter against me the women and girls, as well as the monks that were meeting them; seeking thus to win more fully their support in the attacks they were making on me.

For this reason then, and, moreover, to satisfy the bitterness and hostility of the two confessors opposed to me, I was now the first and direct object of their attacks. For, at Mount Melleray at least, they could not yet directly and openly attack the Abbot, who was more or less shielded there in the seclusion of the Monastery, and by the dignity of his office. But I was, on the contrary, a complete stranger in the place, without any protection, and in the most public and by far the most exposed position at the Monastery, especially with regard to the seculars visiting it. And though, during the summer months, Mount Melleray was frequented by people from every part of the English-speaking world, during the rest of the year it was almost exclusively from the counties of Waterford, Cork and Tipperary that the visitors came, most of them being relatives, connexions or old acquaintances of one or other of my opponents. They therefore thought that, as they could use their friends among the priests, so too they could also easily use all these people against me. In fact, they openly boasted of this; although, to their great disappointment, it turned out afterwards that nearly all these visitors from their own counties were my staunchest defenders, when they saw and understood how unjustly I was attacked by them.

IV

BEFORE coming to these attacks, however, some of the means employed by them to accomplish their ends must be given; for they likewise show how cunningly the combined politicians were working out their plans in order to attain their purpose.

For example, when the Abbot was away, one of the constant companions and confidants of the leader of the party, with his express permission, was coming every day straight from that leader's room to mine telling me how much their leader now thought of me, and how much he was prepared to do for me, and asking me, in return, to join them and write to Rome against the Abbot. He said that my letter would go very far there; that, if I did this thing for them, I should have the whole of them for my friends, and that we could take the mitre off the Abbot's head if he went on restricting their liberty as he was doing. There were others coming to me with the same story and on the same mission, but expressing their designs in more guarded language. Of course, up to this, as I have said, I

had known nothing of the plots against myself that they were hatching all the time, and which soon after came to light. Nor had I then any knowledge or experience of the ways in which such things were manipulated by these monastic politicians. But I know now that, if I had written this treacherous letter, the Abbot would have known of it at once, and this would certainly have been well calculated to turn him, too, against me. For what would he have thought of me if I had done such a thing? They were evidently in this case trying to bring down two birds with the one stone. I was to write a letter against the Abbot; that would strike him. He was then to find out that I wrote this letter, and that would strike me. I should, perhaps, say here that others have testified that the same attempts were repeatedly made to get them also to write to Rome against the Abbot; and some have acknowledged that they foolishly did it for them. The real significance of all this will appear when we come to the trials in Rome.

Though still in complete ignorance of the intrigues and plots against myself, I could not help seeing and knowing a great deal of what was going on against the Abbot at Rome, as well as at the Monastery. Besides what I knew from the emissaries sent to me to ask me to write to Rome against the Abbot, one of the party was openly boasting that he could get him deposed at Rome, and the mitre taken off his head there, if they would support his attacks on the Abbot by sending plenty of letters of complaint from the Monastery against him. Letters and messages were now coming constantly from Rome to the Monastery to the same effect, and I knew this too. I, therefore, told these emissaries that they knew well that the Abbot was right, and that the others were destroying the spirit of discipline and religion in the Monastery, and damaging its reputation; that they all knew likewise that the Abbot was a model for all monks, and the most perfect religious of the whole Order, being both a good and holy man, and a most charitable and exemplary superior; and that it was men who were neither monks nor religious in their lives, but vain, proud, self-seekers, who were attacking him; that their speaking to me on this subject was a gross violation of the rule of silence, no matter who gave them permission; that, therefore, if they came back again to me on the same mission, I would certainly report what they were doing to the Abbot himself.

One would think that we had surely seen the full measure of their treachery in this part of the business. But there was a deeper depth still. All this time, when the Abbot was at home, another section of the party was constantly going to him, endeavouring to get him to attack me and remove me from my position in the church.

They were making against me the most outrageously malicious and groundless charges; and then secretly sending the same terrible charges against me to Rome, and to the General Chapter of the Order in France. All this has now come to light, having been proved at the many enquiries held at Mount Melleray, and in the evidence that was laid before the Sacred Congregation in Rome on several occasions, but especially in 1908. Moreover, their defamatory letters to the General Chapter and to Rome have been long since unearthed and refuted. Could there be anything more false and treacherous? It was not only monastic politics, but Machiavelian diplomacy.

So far, however, my adversaries had failed to entrap me; but by uniting, under their own control, the two factions at the college and in the Monastery, they had so perfected their organization that they now thought, with so many seculars ready to support them, they could do against me whatever they pleased; while the Abbot at this period seemed absolutely powerless to protect me or anyone else against them. So having failed, as we have seen, to entrap me or to get the Abbot to attack me at their dictation, it was now only through the church, where the confessions were heard, that they could operate. Their whole efforts were, therefore, concentrated there.

CHAPTER III

I

THE first attempt, then, was to boycott me in the confessional, by not allowing anyone they could prevent to come to confession to me and by attacking those that did. This was done mainly to satisfy the two confessors who desired that all the respectable penitents should be sent to themselves. But it was done also because it would be difficult for them to get me out of the confessional, which was their main object, as long as nearly all the people, even those they had supposed to be their staunch supporters, were coming to confession to me, and showing their great anxiety to have me as confessor; this being perhaps the best proof that I must be a fairly good confessor and that I was endeavouring to do my work well and honestly. Besides this, the penitents coming to confession could judge of me for themselves, and this made the calumnies and slanders they were spreading about me most ridiculous and absurd, causing them also to recoil on themselves.

For instance, one of the calumnies, manifestly coming from the men who made the same false charge at my profession, was that I was insane, and beating and abusing the penitents because they would

not come to confession to myself; that this was the reason why they had to come to me; that, moreover, I was lacerating them with my tongue when they came, so that everybody in the church could hear me. As will be seen, in the evidence that follows, they had this secretly spread in every direction by their agents. But not one of the thousand of penitents who were coming to me could find any symptom of insanity or madness about me; nor could they ever see me, or hear me, doing or saying any of these wild and extraordinary things. On the contrary, they spoke of me always as a very considerate, sensible and experienced confessor, and as being most careful and patient in the discharge of my duties; while their praise of me in other respects went beyond all bounds—just, I suppose, because they saw what was going on.

There was still another reason for trying to keep the penitents away. They feared that those coming to me might inform me of what was going on, and who they were that were doing it, and getting it done, and that I might induce these penitents to inform the Abbot or other superiors of it. In fact, they accused me of doing this, but, of course, could never produce a single case where I did it; for I knew nothing about it until long after it was proved against them, and they were convicted of it.

II

WE now come to some of the other ways and means adopted by the party to carry out their campaign, not only of boycotting the confessional, but of creating such confusion and turmoil in the church, and at my confessional, as they thought would surely compel me to leave it or the Abbot to remove me from it.

The Brother to whom I have already referred, a conscientious and upright monk, and an honourable and intelligent man, but with whom I had no connexion or acquaintance in the world—never having spoken to him in my life—was in charge of the church where the confessions were heard, in order to look after things there. As long as he was in charge, nothing serious could be attempted. But at the instigation of the party attacking me, he was removed from it. In his place there was appointed one of their own party, a person without any sense of shame or ordinary discretion; and he seemed also to be without any power of judging between the right and wrong of what he did. This change was one of the weak things the Abbot had subsequently to confess that he did, thinking thereby to placate them. But he had to do it because no one to whom the party was opposed could now hold any such position outside.

From the time this new Brother was placed there the trouble and boycotting commenced openly and defiantly, even in the church itself. As soon as this Brother saw any respectable penitents, particularly ladies, who are more sensitive in these things, coming to my confessional or kneeling near it, he would come, a dozen times a day or more, under pretence that he wanted to sweep and clean the place, and sometimes without any pretence at all, abusing and chasing them all away, and sending them to one or other of the two confessors who were so anxious for such penitents. When he had done this, he would then ring the bell of the church for these confessors; for every priest had a fixed number of strokes, by which he knew when he was wanted. After this he would come back to my confessional, watching the penitents, and threatening them if they attempted to return to confession to me. Then the confessor whose bell was rung would come out; but not one in a hundred of these penitents would go to him, though the Brother kept threatening them, to force them to do so. The bells would often be rung, in this way, three or four times for the same penitents; and this, even after they had succeeded, unnoticed by the Brother, in getting to confession to me, or after they had left the church to escape from his threats and menaces. For they used to leave the church and come back again, thinking in this way to escape his observation, or to avoid being noticed by others, who were at the same work as he was. This Brother would also watch at the door the penitents coming into the church, or go through the church from seat to seat, making signs to the people and warning the well-dressed penitents not to go to confession to me but to go instead to one or other of the two confessors; menacing and threatening them when they showed signs of not complying with his wishes. As before, he would likewise ring the bell in these cases, so that there would be twenty bells rung in the day for one confessor, without a single penitent going near him.

One or two others were acting in the same way as this Brother, but with a little more caution. At the same time drunken men, in an almost unconscious state, were being brought, day after day, to my confessional and kept there by the same Brothers. And when I could not hear their confessions whilst in that state, and while they themselves did not at all want confession, I was secretly accused, on account of this, of refusing to hear their confessions, and the confessions of men generally. But it was repeatedly proved at the investigations held at Mount Melleray, and by sworn testimony in Rome, that when these men, after remaining for a few days at the Monastery, became quite sober, and were in a proper state to make their confessions, I heard, without a single exception, the confessions

of every one of them. It was always when they were in an unconscious or drunken state that these Brothers sent or brought them to my confessional. And they often tried to push them into the confessional to me, when they were quite unable to walk, or caused them while in this state to scold and abuse me in the church, for which these poor men were afterwards very sorry.

While this was continuing, on the part of these members of the community, another wing of the attackers was operating from without. These were mostly young girls, who, while they remained at the Monastery, spent most of their time at the lodge or the shop with the monks there, or in the college with those who taught in it. On the alleged authority, then, of the monks they were meeting, these girls were circulating among the other visitors, especially the strangers, every kind of wild story about me, of which many examples will be given in what follows, warning them, at the same time, not for their lives to go near me, or to make their confession to me; for that I was mad, and beating and abusing the people in the church. Then these or other girls from the college and lodge or from the shop would come to the church in parties of three or four; sometimes there would be more of them. They would gather round my confessional, remaining so close to it that no confessions could be heard; or they formed a ring about it so that no one could get to the place for confession, almost always stopping there until I had to leave. They would then leave also. But as soon as I came back, this same party, or another from the lodge or college, was back again, often conducting themselves in a still more disorderly manner than before, mocking, abusing and some of them even attacking the penitents as they went in or came out from the confessional; telling them, at the same time, that they had heard all that they were confessing to me, and that it was not their sins they were confessing, but that it was stories they were bringing to me about their neighbours, and about what was going on outside. Sometimes these girls would leave the confessional for a time and spread themselves through the church, going from seat to seat among the people there, as the Brother used to do, telling them the same stories about me that they were telling elsewhere. At other times, they would stay in the porch of the church or wait outside, and stop the people coming in, to warn them against me; and then, again, they would follow them to the confessional to prevent them, as before, from coming to me, or from being able to make their confessions. Penitents frequently resented all this, and violent scenes, in consequence, were created in the church and even inside in the confessional; for, on some occasions, they went so far as to try to drag the penitents out

of it at one side of the confession box, when I was engaged at the other. But I dare not interfere, though I had a perfect right to do so, nor dare I attempt to speak to any of them or try to prevent this conduct; for to get me, in any way, mixed up in these disorderly scenes and wranglings with young girls in the church was all they wanted in order to give an appearance of truth to what they were saying outside against me, and, as we shall see, writing also to Rome.

On one of these occasions, a girl of this class, as did many others, came into the confessional to abuse me there. This girl accused me of following one of the confessors and herself to the Angels' Chapel, which is a private and secluded one, and of watching them there, saying that she was told it on good authority, and that I was seen doing it. Of course, this was absolutely false, being only, as was proved afterwards, a feigned pretext for abusing me. I told her so; and, when she persisted in her abuse, I told her that either herself or her "good authority" must have invented the story. I should say that, when discovered at such things, none of these girls ever gave their true names, while the Brother at the lodge had them entered in the visitors' book under false ones. This girl, for instance, gave her name as "Miss Aherne of Cork"; but her identity could never afterwards be discovered, nor anything about her, save only that there was no such person, at least of that name, in Cork.

In a succeeding chapter will be given the clear and incontrovertible proofs of all I have been writing. I must, however, in this case anticipate a little, in order to show how it was discovered who it was that sent this girl to abuse me, as so many others were sent; for here it throws a good deal of special light on what I have been describing as going on in the church. It shows who they were that were instigating these girls to do what they were doing, and the purpose for which it was done.

One of the two confessors already mentioned, at this very time, denounced me to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, for having used injurious words and caused fear to young girls because they would not choose me for their confessor. This charge will be dealt with later on. Here it is enough to say that, when the charge was fully investigated, this case of the pretended "Miss Aherne of Cork" was the only one this confessor, or anyone else, ever attempted to produce against me. But my accuser, though he had her real address, would not give it. All through it was one of their plans to deliver their blows under fictitious names, and then keep me fighting with shadows that could not be caught, because they had no real existence. But notwithstanding this, as I demanded and insisted on it, a searching enquiry into this case was held; and, on the occasion of that

enquiry, a letter written when at Mount Melleray by this pretended "Miss Aherne of Cork" was produced and sworn to. In this letter she described how she was sent by my accuser and by the Brother at the lodge to the confessional to annoy me there and how she did it; and how the Brother at the lodge got me to the confessional by leaving a note in my room, in which it was stated that there were ladies wanting to go to confession to me in the church. I had that note, and it was produced at the enquiry; and it was proved also by three sworn witnesses as well as by myself, that there was nobody, save this one girl herself, waiting for me at the confessional. This was one of innumerable cases where, as will be seen, it was proved that they were accusing me in Rome of being the cause of the troubles that they were originating themselves.

But there were other things also that contributed very much to make the confessions almost impossible for the penitents who were coming to confession to me, as well as for myself. Another set of women, intimate friends and acquaintances of the political monks, were secretly kept for long periods at the lodging house and at the lodge, contrary to the rules and regulations of the Monastery. These women, sometimes one of them sometimes two of them, used to sit watching by my confessional, day after day, from morning till night, enquiring from almost every penitent why they were staying so long at confession with me, and what I was saying to them, or asking questions about the other visitors. As many of these penitents were strangers, who had come hundreds of miles to make a general confession of their whole lives, this was particularly painful and intolerable to them. Then, at the dinner table or at the ladies' lodging house, in the presence of all the visitors, and frequently in the presence of one of the Brothers at the lodge and encouraged by him, they would accuse these penitents of carrying, under cover of confessions, stories to me about the other visitors. They would report also that I was telling the Abbot or others inside everything that I heard from them; saying often that the guest Brother, or some of the monks at the college or in the shop, had told them so. At other times, the story would be that I was heard asking the penitent about this or that person who was stopping at the Monastery. In some cases, where they were afraid of the penitents, these things, instead of being told publicly, were whispered about as secrets among the visitors. All this was proved by evidence that could admit of no doubt, and the proofs were forwarded to Rome.

This was throwing nearly all the penitents coming to confession to me into the utmost confusion; and it was evidently for this purpose that it was being done. The result in many cases was that though

these persons had come to the Monastery to make a peaceful retreat and a good general confession they could do neither one nor the other, but were leaving the Monastery a hundred times more miserable than when they came. What increased more and more the painful nature of these cases was the fact that it was done at Mount Melleray, where they had hoped to find nothing but religious peace, spiritual comfort, and perfect reconciliation with God and their own conscience. Moreover, most of these penitents could never hope for another such opportunity, as was now being so wantonly and cruelly spoiled. For many of them had waited for years for this opportunity of making a general confession at Mount Melleray; and for that purpose had come specially not only from the remoter parts of Ireland, but in many cases from England or Scotland, or from America or Australia.

There was one woman from County Waterford who spent eight or nine weeks every year for three years at this work. She was meeting for an hour every morning one of the priests at the lodge and then telling the visitors that she had his sanction and authority for all that she did, and for watching my confessional; because, she said, there were suspicions of me. Until it was detected, this woman was entered in the visitors' book at the lodge, and passed there, among those with whom she was interfering, under the false name of Miss Peary. This case, and the real name and address of this woman, were proved at all the investigations at Mount Melleray, and the same facts were sworn to, and forwarded to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, so that she was prevented from coming any more to the Monastery.

But there was yet another thing that was causing a great deal of confusion in the church, and a great deal of talk and ill-feeling too. One of the confessors, already referred to, for a long time would hear no confessions but those of ladies and a few gentlemen and students. Women were kept at his confessional chasing away from it the poor penitents, and then going through the church, and especially to my confessional, telling all the ladies and young girls that they must go to this Father for confession; trying at the same time to force and compel them to do so. Frequent complaints were made by visitors to the Abbot about this; for it was causing a great deal of confusion and trouble among the visitors and penitents. The Abbot, therefore, caused enquiries to be made from one of these women as to who authorized her to do what she was doing. The reply was that the confessor himself had done so, and that she was told also at the lodge to do it; and, besides, that one of the priests from the Monastery, who pretended to have the Abbot's own authority in the matter, not

only authorized but commanded it to be done. When this woman understood the wrong she was doing—for she was completely destroying the peace of the church and of the penitents—she expressed her sorrow for it, and said she certainly would not do such things for them any more. Others, however, continued it.

All this time the confessor in question was scarcely hearing any confessions at all—not half a dozen in the week; yet he was sitting in the confessional for three or four hours in the day in conversation with some of the women and girls who were causing most of the trouble. Then he would come from his confessional, and go through the church in conversation with them, encouraging them and urging them on. Waiting for others at the church door or outside it, he would take them to the little secluded Angels' Chapel that was at some distance, and there give them presents of pictures, beads, or scapulars, etc., which they would bring back and show to others in the church, asking them also to go to him for some. Others he would bring to the seat immediately in front of my confessional, and leave them there for three-quarters of an hour or longer. He would then come out again to them and give them also presents of the same kind as he had given the others. These were invariably the women and girls who conducted themselves worst. And much of what I have described above, about the girls in the church, happened while they were waiting in this way for him. Like all the rest this, too, was proved at all the enquiries, and the evidence that proved it was subsequently sworn to, and forwarded to Rome; and for it the Abbot had to remove this confessor from the confessional. Now, what made these cases more glaring still was the fact that all this time these priests, as came to light afterwards, were denouncing me to Rome for showing a preference for hearing the confessions of women and for refusing to hear the confessions of men and of the poor people, that is, for doing the very things that they were doing themselves. At the same time the confessor, just referred to, maintained at Mount Melleray that he had full authority from Rome and the Holy See for all that he was doing.

III

THESE things that I have been relating, with innumerable others of the same kind, were of daily, indeed constant, occurrence; and the church became so disturbed by them that it was quite impossible to hear confessions under such conditions. In the end, therefore, I had to complain of this to the Father in charge at the Monastery, though

he was himself the leader of the party. The Abbot at the time was away, and it was always in his absence that by far the worst of these things were done. I told the Father that I could not continue to hear confessions, unless a stop were put to this; for that the church, instead of being the peaceful house of God, was being turned into a regular pandemonium, and confessions into a mockery.

At first, he pretended ignorance of what was going on; but, after parleying for some time and finding that I knew that he was cognisant of and encouraging it, he said that it was the Abbot's order that the respectable ladies should go to one of the other confessors instead of to me; that, on the contrary, they were all going to me, and that the other confessors were complaining that I had all the "desirable" penitents. My answer was, that I was practically hearing all the confessions in the church; for the others would not hear the poor people, and the rich people seeing this and understanding what was going on, would not go to confession to them; that I never made any distinction between one penitent and another; and, as was well known, that I had no desire for one class of penitents rather than another, and had never seen nor heard of such things until I came to Mount Melleray. I told him that, instead of being jealous about these penitents, I should be delighted if they would go to the other confessors, and that I had always tried, as far as in my power, to make them do so, but that the way they were upsetting the church, and the confessional and the penitents, was such that no one could hear confessions in the circumstances. I told him some of the things that were done; but I discovered afterwards that he was aware all along of every one of them, and that, in fact, he was himself the cause of most, if not all, of them.

He then said that those who were doing these things in the church had the authority of the Abbot for all they were doing; that the Abbot had ordered all the ladies and respectable penitents to be sent to one of the other confessors; and besides, that it was his own special privilege to send the penitents to whatever confessor he chose, and that he could make use of the members of the community, or whoever else he pleased, to effect this. On this occasion he also declared that he was authorized to prevent the students from going to confession to me; saying that he learned that I was hearing almost the whole of them, and that complaints were made to the Abbot about it. This makes it quite clear that, in reality, this Father was largely the originating cause of all the trouble in the church, and that he was using the secular people, who could not be called to account for it, to do these things. The Abbot, in the end, had to forbid any of these seculars, that he was making use of in this

way, to be allowed to stop at the Monastery, as this was the only remedy he had against it.

Believing to a certain extent what I had been told about the Abbot authorizing what they were doing, I told him when he returned to the Monastery all that had happened, saying that I could not continue to hear confessions if this were allowed to go on. The Abbot declared that he had never given such orders to anyone, as had been alleged; that neither he, nor anyone else, had any power to give such orders; that all penitents must be left perfectly free to choose their own confessors, and especially students, who were not free to go to any other locality as the lay people could.

Here is the Abbot's own testimony on this matter, as it was laid before the Sacred Congregation in 1908:—"Permission being asked from me as Abbot to have the ladies and the respectable penitents sent to Father ——" (this was the confessor who was denouncing me to Rome), "I refused the permission, particularly as the Father who asked it had been repeatedly forbidden to interfere in any way in matters connected with the confessions. I said that the penitents must be left absolutely free to choose their confessors for themselves, and that no one must interfere with them in so doing; that I myself could not interfere with their liberty in this matter, nor could I permit it. Immediately after this, I had to go to America, and when I returned I found that not only had this Father himself endeavoured in every way to prevent the penitents from going to Father Isidore, but I found also that a number of the members of the community, and many women and girls besides, had been employed for this purpose. I found likewise that he had told Father Isidore that as Abbot I had ordered the respectable penitents to be sent to one of the other confessors. That was not true, I never gave such an order in my life. After my return from America, I had several letters and constant complaints from ladies who were grossly interfered with to prevent them from going to confession to Father Isidore, and to compel them to go to the Father, to whom they had pretended that I ordered these penitents to be sent. I did not tell Father Isidore any of these things at the time; save only that I had never given anyone liberty to interfere with penitents, because I had no authority myself to do so."

IV

MATTERS had now reached such a pitch that I could not possibly continue to hear confessions in the church, unless some protection were afforded to myself and the penitents coming to confession to me.

For, besides what I have described as occurring there, I was being calumniated and slandered in the most outrageous manner by the whole party and their agents, not only in and around the Monastery, but far and near, wherever they could get anyone to carry their stories; while I had no relatives or connexions outside, who might help to prevent this or to contradict them; nor could I myself open my lips in self-defence. But this will come out more plainly in what follows. Therefore, though hundreds of penitents, some of them having come from very long distances, as already seen, were going away from the Monastery, as they would not go to the other confessors, I firmly refused to go any more to the secular church to hear confessions, until a full and searching enquiry was made into the whole matter. There was, moreover, another reason why I insisted on this investigation. I had already learned that, while they were carrying on all this at Mount Melleray, they were, as already stated, secretly accusing me in Rome of doing the things that they were doing themselves.

In the end, the enquiry had to be granted, and the facts that I have stated above, as occurring outside, as well as at the church and confessional, were established by oral and documentary evidence that placed them above the possibility of contradiction or the shadow of doubt. In fact, those concerned had to admit them, while my complete innocence of every charge or allegation they made against me was fully established.

The Abbot, up to this, seems to have believed that there must have been something in so many accusations, denunciations and charges that they were making against me to himself and sending to Rome—at least that there must be some indiscretion on my part, that otherwise there would not be such an attack all round by the party. But, proved guilty as they were at this enquiry beyond the possibility of doubt or contradiction, and my complete innocence being so clearly established, he had no option now but to condemn them, particularly the leaders and their more active agents. On the other hand, he had to declare me perfectly innocent of every charge, great or small, that they had made against me. The sworn proofs, as well as the documentary evidence that established these facts, and the Abbot's sworn testimony of the result of the enquiry, are still in the General's Office, and in the Office of the Sacred Congregation in Rome. This now has brought us down to the middle of 1899.

CHAPTER IV

I

FOR many years after this, the Abbot told me nothing about my adversaries being proved so guilty at this enquiry nor about my own vindication being so completely established. And, except that they were somewhat more guarded than previously, things went on little better for the next twelve months. The cause of this was that the Abbot was still either powerless, or afraid to correct any of the party, particularly as they were now constantly boasting of the power and influence they had in Rome. Then the Regular Visitor of the Monastery, Abbot Eugene Vachette of Melleray in France, who was also Vicar-General of the whole Order, held, in 1900, a most searching and exhaustive official enquiry into the whole case, as he had also done at the enquiry he had made in 1898. He was assisted at both these enquiries by Abbot Stainslaus White from Rome.

I cannot, perhaps, explain the whole case better, nor prove it more fully and clearly, than by giving the following official report of these enquiries in 1898 and 1900, as forwarded by Abbot Eugene to the Abbot-General in Rome. I have, fortunately, a copy of this official report in Abbot Eugene's own handwriting, the Abbot of Mount Melleray having given it to me in May, 1908, some months before his death.

As we shall soon see, it is for many reasons a most important document. It is the more so, because for wisdom and prudence, for sound judgment and wide experience, as well as for his uprightness of character and his spirit of justice and fair play to every one, Abbot Eugene is by far the most remarkable man in the whole Cistercian Order. Here, then, is Abbot Eugene's report:

" TO THE MOST REV. DOM SEBASTIAN, ABBOT-GENERAL

" OUR LADY OF MELLERAY (FRANCE),

" *June 12, 1901.*

" My Most Rev. Father,

" The Abbot of Mount Melleray, Ireland, in a letter of June 7, sends me the two letters which he has received from our good Procurator-General, Dom Benedict, dated April 25 and May 8, regarding the denunciations made against Father Isidore and his tolerance of this Father confessor.

" There is nothing new to me in these denunciations, which are absolutely the same as those formulated by the same individuals two

years ago in letters addressed to Rome, which your Paternity sent me, in order that I might investigate this affair, as Father Immediate and Superior; and, formulated also, in letters addressed to me from Mount Melleray, where they asked me to make the Visitation as soon as possible, in order to judge of this matter on the spot. In one of these letters Father J——, the prime instigator of this movement against Father Isidore, I say, who knows Rome and the Roman Congregations well, threatens to make so many accusations, to return so often to the attack, and to be so persistent, that the judges, from whom he seeks to obtain the sentence, tired out with his persistence, will, for peace sake, accord to him the condemnation and the removal of Father Isidore from the confessional and the Monastery.

“Then I made the Visitation, and I heard the parties. Abbot Stanislaus, who accompanied me, and who knows well this Father who made the accusations, and who was his old companion in the Procurator’s Office in Rome, was able to judge as well as myself; and both of us judged and decided that the accusations of this Father first, and then of another Father who had been the old Prior of Mount St. Joseph, Roscrea, and who has since spent many years in America and elsewhere, and of many others, instigated and inspired by these two Fathers, have no foundation at all. We have only found groundless assertions without any proofs. And even the groundless assertions were expressed in exaggerated language, which charity did not inspire, but rather pride and jealousy, etc. Then we concluded that it was right to keep Father Isidore in the confessional, and that, on the contrary, Father J—— should be sacrificed; for he is himself the cause of the trouble and disorder of which he complains. The Abbot of Mount Melleray has not dared to do what I counselled him to do, and that is why the evil continues, and the war breaks out again.

“The Rev. Father Benedict asks for the removal of Father Isidore from the confessional; and he adds, ‘If it is true that he conducts himself in the way that they have said,’ and again, ‘if you do not do it, the Sacred Congregation may whip you to it through the Bishop if the accusations are true.’

“Very well, I say, if the Abbot does this which he is counselled to do, he will in my opinion (I am not infallible) do an act of injustice, contrary to the good of souls, and will satisfy evil passions which should be crushed out, rather than listened to. After this act of weakness, the Abbot will not find himself any better on account of it; his tolerance of them will not have won for him the esteem of those who will have wrung it from him.

“On the contrary, since the two Fathers above mentioned, who are opposed to Father Isidore, demand an enquiry by the Bishop, I

advise that this intervention by the Bishop be accepted. Because I am persuaded that this enquiry will redound to the honour of Father Isidore, whom I have judged to be a good and holy priest in his conduct and in the confessional. But I ask that the calumniators, convicted as they have been at the Visitation, where they could give no reasonable proofs of their accusations—convicted of having yielded to their bad passions—that they shall be punished exemplarily in order that they may not be able to say:—‘We can calumniate, if that succeeds, we shall have gained our case; if it does not succeed we shall be nothing the worse for it.’

“I insist upon this point, because, to my knowledge, two cases like this one—denunciations of two abbots—were made to Rome to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. [One of these abbots was your humble servant, the other the Abbot of Aiguebelle.] Both these denunciations were found false when investigated, and they contented themselves in Rome with throwing the defamatory writings into the waste basket.

“It should be as in the Army:—‘You accuse, you denounce; if the thing is true, it is right and good, and a remedy will be applied; but if the thing is false, you shall be punished, that you may not be anxious to commence it again.’

“(Signed) BR. EUGENE, Abbot of Melleray, France.”

Could there be imagined a more complete vindication of my conduct that this? While at the same time the conduct of the two confessors and of those combined and co-operating with them at Mount Melleray, and the motives that were prompting their false and unfounded accusations, and all that we have seen going on at the Monastery and in the church, are seen in this letter as if reflected in a mirror. After this report can there be any doubt whatever about the real causes of the trouble at Mount Melleray?

But it is not merely in this that its overwhelming weight and importance lies. From it we see also that they knew in Rome all about this evil work that was going on at Mount Melleray, and that they permitted it to proceed unchecked, and the guilty disturbers to remain unpunished; for Abbot Eugene made his investigation and his report for the S. Congregation and the General’s Office there. Moreover, we see that the most guilty man of them all at Mount Melleray, who knew Rome and the Roman Congregation well, boasts that when the opportune time comes he can get me punished in Rome for the very crimes of which he and his accomplices are found guilty.

This is truly an astounding revelation. And even though Abbot

Eugene gives us some idea of the corruption that was festering in the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, it would seem at first sight almost an impossibility that things could be so bad. But the facts regarding it, that will come to light in the course of this narrative, will prove far more than all that Abbot Eugene has here said, far more indeed than anyone could possibly imagine. The pity is that these facts cannot be given here and now. We must, however, clear away a huge mass of lying rubbish, and then tunnel our way through mountains of blinding chicanery and stifling redtapeism before we can reach them in Rome, for as they love the darkness so much better than the light, these obstacles that lie in our way and conceal the truth are part of their plans of attack and defence.

Nor must we forget this letter and its contents when we come to their doings and intrigues in Rome. They will then throw back an illuminating and magnifying light on what Abbot Eugene here tells us; while this letter will show that these things we shall see perpetrated by the officials of the Sacred Congregation and of the Abbot-General's Office, must be wilful and unpardonable. Indeed, without this letter the many things we shall see done by these officials in Rome would be quite incomprehensible to the reader, and would seem incredible to anyone.

II

ABBOT EUGENE, as we see, complains of the weakness of the Abbot of Mount Melleray in not correcting and duly punishing the convicted calumniators and disturbers at Mount Melleray, as he had ordered him to do, and also for not duly protecting me from them. This certainly was a great injustice to me, whatever was the cause; and it was doubly so, because, until it was too late, the Abbot never told me, nor anyone else at Mount Melleray, that Abbot Eugene had found these two confessors and their accomplices so guilty, and that he had so completely exonerated and vindicated me from every allegation and charge they had brought against me. On the contrary, the party at Mount Melleray was reporting everywhere that it was I who was found guilty of all they charged me with, and that I was ordered to be removed from the confessional, but that the Abbot was too timid to do so; some of them declaring that they had this information from the General's Office in Rome. So that I was still left, not only without any protection whatever, but with the stigma of guilt on my character; nor could I raise a finger or speak a word to protect or vindicate myself.

But, now, the question arises, was it only weakness of character on

the part of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, as Abbot Eugene seems to think, that had prevented, and was still preventing, him from correcting and punishing the guilty, and from duly protecting the innocent; or were there other reasons why he could do neither the one nor the other? The Abbot himself has testified that he could do nothing all this time to correct or restrain these convicted men or to protect me or anyone else from them; because all the power and authority that rightfully belonged to his office was taken from him in this matter by the French Abbots of the General Chapter, and by the officials of the General's Office in Rome, supported there by the officials of the Sacred Congregation; and that it was secretly transferred to the convicted monks themselves. And, as we shall see, the subsequent action of the General Chapter, the General's Office, and the Sacred Congregation fully established the truth and certainty of what the Abbot has testified. Indeed in the letter above quoted, Abbot Eugene plainly enough proves the same, though he seems somewhat afraid of saying it openly. For what else can be the manifest meaning of what he tells us about the doings of these Congregations in Rome and about the boastings of the convicted man who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations so well, concerning what he could get them to do against me, no matter how innocent I might be? Or what could they mean by threatening to get the Bishop of Waterford to whip the Abbot to punish me after my innocence had been so clearly established? Particularly as they did, as we shall see, try by secret fraud, to use the Bishop's whip against me, until in the end its lashes fell quick and heavy on themselves.

III

THE next query is, why did the French Abbots of the General Chapter act in this unlawful way, depriving the Abbot of Mount Melleray of the legitimate powers of his office, and of the right of governing and correcting his community, and of protecting those who could not protect themselves? And why do we see them screening the evil-doers at Mount Melleray and giving that power and authority to the rebellious and disorderly members of the community? These questions are asked, because men, either individually or collectively, do not usually act thus without some very selfish motive or purpose in view. Well, in this case there was a manifest motive and purpose, and it was a very selfish one too. The Monastery of New Melleray in America is an Irish institution, founded from and by Mount Melleray in Ireland at the cost of many Irish lives, and of much Irish labour,

suffering and money. All the monks there were Irish, and no Monastery in the Order has such rich possessions in land as New Melleray. But a majority of the French Abbots in the General Chapter set their hearts on getting this Monastery, with all its rich lands, for themselves and for the monks of their own nationality. They had already passed a resolution in the General Chapter to take it from the Irish and give it to themselves.

Now, according to the Laws and Constitutions of the Cistercian Order, this Monastery, being founded by and from Mount Melleray in Ireland, belongs to it as Mother-House; and Abbot Carthage, as Abbot of Mount Melleray, whose duty it was to do so in the interest of both Monasteries, strenuously opposed, and baffled and beat, these French Abbots in their efforts to grab New Melleray and its possessions. But though once beaten, the French Abbots were not to be baulked in their designs on the Monastery and its possessions, if they could at all effect their purpose by any means, foul or fair; and the one thing now necessary for their success was to get the Abbot of Mount Melleray out of the way, by taking the mitre off his head, and putting into his place an abbot who would be their servile creature to hand over the Monastery of New Melleray to them.

In all this the French Abbots were thoroughly backed up in Rome by one who was there, and who was the agent and confederate of the men at Mount Melleray that were opposing the Abbot. At the same time, at Mount Melleray the two confessors who were opposed to the Abbot and myself, as well as the leader of the factionists, were also backing up this scheme, as a sure means of putting down the Abbot at Mount Melleray, and of getting one of themselves into his place. It was for asking me to join this conspiracy, that I had threatened to report to the Abbot the emissaries, who, as I have already stated, came to ask me to write to Rome against him. We can then easily see in all this why the French Abbots in the General Chapter acted against the Abbot of Mount Melleray and supported his opponents, so as to prevent him from being able to correct the many grievous evils and scandals at the Monastery, and to protect the innocent there; and why the two confessors and the whole of their party were able to defy the Abbot and to do as they pleased.

But why did the Sacred Congregation in Rome support all this? Though there were other influences at work also, like so many other things, it was done mainly for money. Overwhelming sworn proofs of this, that could not be questioned or contradicted, were produced before that Congregation itself, at the trials that took place in Rome over this and cognate matters in 1907 and 1908. And sworn witnesses

of the highest character, most of them priests and religious, testified, on that occasion, that this money was obtained by a priest who was falsely pretending to be a medical doctor, and to have permission and authority from the Pope and the Abbot-General for practising as such, with their special blessing on his work as a thaumaturgus. He was spending all his time while in Rome itself, and through Ireland and in many other parts, pretending to cure all sorts of infirmities, particularly in the case of women and girls; amassing thereby immense sums of money, and then boasting that, with the influence this money procured for him at the Offices of the Congregation of Bishops, he could get done there anything he desired. I have still certified copies of this evidence, but refrain from publishing it here, because it contains names and facts that it would hardly be fair to bring unnecessarily before the public. Later on, however, I will give ample and sufficient proof of it. The outcome of all this was that, in the arduous task of governing the Monastery under such difficulties and against such odds, the Abbot had nothing on which to rely, except the influence that his own personal worth and his high character secured for him; while the power and authority from the Holy See, which rightfully belonged to his office, was turned dead against him, and against every one at Mount Melleray who would not join the factionist party that was opposing him there.

IV

BEFORE proceeding further it may, perhaps, be best to say a few words about the then Abbot of Mount Melleray. He had been for nearly fifty years at the Monastery—in fact from his boyhood; first as a student at the college; next as a novice; then as a professed member of the community and a priest. Such was his capacity, his fidelity to duty, and his remarkable prudence and wisdom, but above all his great virtue, that, immediately after his solemn profession and ordination as priest, he was made Prior and remained so until, on the death of Abbot Bruno in 1894, he was elected Abbot. During his whole life he was the model monk of the community; and as Prior, in the discharge of every duty, he was looked up to as perfection itself. During all the long years of his monastic life, except two or three weeks in 1904, when his life was despaired of, he had never once been absent from, or even late for, the first office of the Church in the morning, whether it began at one or two o'clock; and this, though his duties often kept him working all night, or the greater part of it. For thirty years of his monastic life, except on Sundays, he

never, from September 14 to Easter Sunday, took anything but one meal in the day, and that at half-past two in the afternoon and in Lent at a quarter past four. From Easter Sunday to September 14, again, he took nothing but one meal and a collation—never eggs, or fish, or flesh-meat of any kind, and not even a drink of cold water outside his meals. During the long years that he spent in the Monastery, he never took five minutes' recreation; or rather, his recreation consisted in a change from one duty or devotional exercise to another. No one ever entered his room but they found him either at his laborious duties or his studies or on his knees in prayer and communion with God.

As superior, whether as Abbot or Prior, he never refused to any member of the community a service or kindness that lay within his power or jurisdiction. In the case of sickness or infirmity, every one was treated by him with the utmost care and attention, receiving the very best the Monastery could afford. He was strict, stern and severe with nobody but himself; though, of course, as superior, by word and example—particularly by example—he preached always, and in all things, the spirit of self-denial and mortification, after the model of his Divine Master. He never refused to see any member of the community, no matter how frequently he went to him or how troublesome he might be, and no matter how much it might interfere with his own convenience or even with his occupations and labours. And there never was heard from him a word of personal complaint on this or any other subject; though, in consequence, he was often obliged to labour through the whole night in order to complete the duties and obligations of the day, one of which he never left unfulfilled. His life and labours with his long and severe fasts and abstinence seemed indeed a miracle of God.

He was never known to speak an unkind or uncharitable word of anyone. And his words and his conduct indicated a mind incapable of entertaining an unkind or uncharitable thought. Even when, as superior, he had to correct a failing or a fault, though he did it firmly and fearlessly; yet he was careful never to hurt needlessly anyone's feelings, or to cast on his character any reproach that might injure him in the eyes of his neighbours. His humility was such that, if there was anything he seemed to dread in this world it was its praises and flattery, or that people should admire, esteem, or praise him for anything he did. If he did anything remarkably well, he tried somehow or other to get the credit of it transferred to some one else; and if, on the other hand, anything went wrong, he invariably endeavoured if possible to get the blame of it fixed on himself. He thus endeavoured to make heaven the sole treasury of his merit,

where neither the moth of vanity nor the worm of pride could enter or consume. It was thus that he tried earnestly to mould his own life after the model of his Divine Master before preaching it to others.

But with all this, Abbot Carthage lacked many of the qualities that the situation at Mount Melleray now demanded; for, like all humanity, he had his limitations. Until they had grown too strong for him, he had no conception of, nor did he seem capable of realizing, the gravity and the great evil to religion and to the community of the plots and intrigues that the professional politicians were carrying on. They were long able to keep him in complete ignorance of it, for in this sort of thing they were really well-trained; and almost from morning to night one or other of the intriguers and plotters was with him in his room, with well-concocted but false and deceptive stories. At the same time their whole vengeance was turned on anyone else if seen going near him or speaking to him, lest they might tell him the true state of affairs, while they took good care to turn his mind with stories against every such person. Many in the community, who would have been honest with him, suffered severely in this way, and had to give up going near him or speaking to him. Thus, the very politicians, who were plotting and intriguing so deeply against him, had him for a long time completely in their hands. There were one or two of them, whom, as he acknowledged afterwards, he trusted most implicitly, and these were the very persons that he found in the end to be deceiving him most, and plotting most treacherously against him.

Nor can it be denied that, in another respect, he was considerably wanting in what, at the time, the circumstances of the Monastery and his position demanded. He was spending almost the whole of his time in his room, either working at his desk, or in prayer, or receiving and listening to the false brethren, who were coming to him with stories that were only meant to blind and deceive him, when it would have been much better—for it was his duty—had he gone himself to the ladies' lodge, to the gentlemen's guest house, to the reception rooms, and to the shop, but above all, to the schools and college, where there were so many abuses, and to the other places where the monks and seculars met, and had he—not leaving it to anyone else—seen for himself and corrected at an earlier date what was going wrong in all these places. He is the less to be excused on this point as every one in the Monastery knew what was going wrong there, but dare not speak of it owing to what has been said above. Besides, he himself must have had considerable knowledge of the abuses and scandals that were occurring; for the letters

he was receiving on the subject, some of which he afterwards produced, show this. But he either failed to realize then their serious gravity and their evil consequences, or, which is more probable, knowing the backing and support that they had at the General Chapter in France, and more especially in Rome, he feared to face the plotters and intriguers. He temporized and delayed, hoping always that time and prayer, as he used to say, would change their hearts and bring all things right.

Yet there is still the one undeniable fact, which, I think, proves clearly that very much, if not all the cause, of this weakness of the Abbot in dealing with the disturbers at Mount Melleray was to be found in the conduct of the Abbots of the General Chapter in France, and of the officials in the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation in Rome.

In 1904, as will be seen, by getting a letter forwarded unknown to them to the Pope, he convicted these officials in Rome of being guilty of the grossest wrong-doing in this matter. Having so far succeeded, he then set about putting things right at Mount Melleray and having the rules and regulations of the Order faithfully observed. He easily succeeded in effecting a perfect reformation; for his saintly life and example gave him a wonderful power and influence over even the most refractory of the Brethren. But the moment he succeeded in doing this, without rhyme or reason, he was degraded for it by the French Abbots and the men in Rome. And this was done by them though he had a perfect right, and was bound by his office and by the commands and injunctions of his superiors, to do what he did. So that, if the Abbot sometimes failed to correct the evil, and the evildoers under his jurisdiction, there may be more excuse for it than we know, seeing that he was degraded and deposed for it the moment he attempted to do it.

The trials that followed in Rome, when we come to them in 1904 and 1905, and again in 1907 and 1908, will fully demonstrate and prove for us every statement contained in this chapter; showing at the same time that all that was going on at Mount Melleray was part and parcel of the schemes and plans they were secretly working out in Rome and at the General Chapter of the Order in France.

CHAPTER V

I

WE must now revert to the year 1900, when the enquiry, as seen, was made at Mount Melleray by Abbot Eugene, and see how things were going on there, from that time until the Regular Visitation and formal enquiry in 1903.

Besides condemning the party, as seen in the letter given above, Abbot Eugene, at the investigation of 1900, ordered that none of the monks, without any exception, should be permitted to converse or hold any communication whatsoever with any secular, whether visitor, guest or employee at the Monastery, without direct and express permission from the Abbot. This was only commanding the observance of the laws and binding rules of the Order; for, as we have also seen, the same is therein strictly laid down and enjoined. But now, the whole party that was opposed to the Abbot and carrying on the revolutionary campaign, as we may call it, set themselves, from the moment Abbot Eugene left the door of the Monastery, to trample under foot every one of the decisions and commands he had given on this subject as well as the authority of the Abbot and the rules and laws of the Order, as if they were all only made to be laughed at; maintaining that their prescriptive right to do so was recognized by Rome and the General Chapter.

Many of them spent almost the whole of their time now with the visitors or with other seculars about the Monastery, without ever asking or getting any permission at all. From early morning to the last call of the Monastery bell, one or other of them was to be found almost always, and everywhere about the Monastery, with seculars and especially with the girls and women who had caused, and were still causing, all the trouble in the church, and against whom Abbot Eugene's orders and commands had been specially directed. Besides being proved by overwhelming evidence at the enquiry that followed in 1903, and by the testimony of many sworn witnesses on the occasion of the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908, of which the originals are still in the archives of the Sacred Congregation there, this is clearly seen by the fact that in 1903 the Regular Visitor had to condemn them again for it, and had to lay a special injunction on the Abbot himself to adopt the most stringent measures to restrain them altogether from this forbidden and most pernicious intercourse.

At this period, therefore, I was more than ever exposed to their

vengeance, and after their exposure at the investigation of 1900 their fury knew no bounds; while I was still without any protection in the world, for the Abbot now seemed almost powerless to restrain them, or to protect anyone or even protect himself from them. At the confessional and in the church, the scenes described in the previous chapters, as occurring before 1900, were all renewed by the same agents of the party, while new hands were employed at it. Pickets were now placed everywhere—some of the monks themselves acting in this capacity—to watch those who came to the Monastery, and to prevent them from coming to confession to me, or attack them if they came. So that scarcely anyone coming to the place could escape them; if one did not catch them another did. In this way it was almost a reign of terror for many of the penitents who came to confession to me.

But this very thing prevented the people from going to the other confessors, for they knew quite well what was the cause of it, and were indignant and disgusted with what they saw going on; so that three times as many penitents as I could reasonably hear were coming to confession to me, while scarcely one at all would go to the other two confessors. This infuriated the whole party more and more, and while still continuing their old game, they were every day inventing and adopting new tactics. Abundant illustrations and proofs of this will be given in the succeeding chapters, as well as in the accounts of what followed at the Bishop's sworn enquiry on January 6, 1904, and at the trials in Rome; so that a full account of them is not required here, and repetition would only confuse and weary the reader.

There are, however, a few things that must be given in order that what follows may be more easily understood. Here is one of them. A new and vigorous campaign of calumnies and slanders was now started against me, and regular torrents of them—some of which, perhaps, have no parallel in the history of the Church—were poured out from the Monastery against me, as a priest and confessor, and poured out through every available channel and in every possible direction; while they had their agents everywhere spreading and propagating them, and then corroborating them by every sort of false stories about me. And, as a rule, every one of these stories that left the Monastery generated legions of even worse calumnies, as they were spread abroad, and added to by those assisting outside in the work. These too with all their additions and embellishments were brought back to the Monastery, and brought into it and quoted even there as notorious and incontrovertible facts. It was a thousand times worse than if they had been published in all

the newspapers of the country, for then they could be met and contradicted. But here the thing was done in such a secret and intangible way, and through so many secret and other agencies that were entirely beyond my reach, that there was no possibility of effectually meeting and disproving them, particularly as I was a comparative stranger and could speak to no one. And even if they were sometimes contradicted in particular places, they took a new form there, the old ones appearing elsewhere worse than ever; until, in the end, most of them in this way were spread to almost every corner of Ireland and often far beyond it.

II

BUT besides blackening and ruining my character in the eyes of the public at home, the originators of these calumnies at Mount Melleray had always in view the deeper and more far-reaching object of getting them forwarded to Rome through every possible channel. Most of them were specially intended for the ears of the Bishops, particularly the Bishop of Waterford, who was to help to convey them to the General Chapter of the Order in France and especially to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, as we shall afterwards find that he actually did. They were likewise sent to both these places by priests and monks from the Monastery, and were sent, also, in the names of some of the women and girls who were frequenting it. Moreover, the priest from Rome who was practising as a doctor, was every year coming to Ireland for three months, and spending his time going up and down the country, particularly through Cork and Waterford, where he met most of the women and girls who frequented Mount Melleray, for they nearly all flocked to him for cures, and were telling one another and telling him the wild stories they had heard about my extraordinary doings in the church at the Monastery. He was visiting also most of the convents, and these stories about me from Mount Melleray were there also ready for him. Then, this too was all going straight to Rome, and to the General Chapter in France. Assuredly this would prove in Rome that I was not only guilty of the things with which they charged me but that they were notorious and a public scandal. For who could think of doubting so many and such seemingly distinct but converging authorities, all telling the same tales; or who could imagine that such stories were only groundless calumnies invented in a Cistercian Monastery and deliberately spread about in this way for the purpose of having them carried to Rome?

Yet, no matter by whom, or in what abundance and variety, they

might be carried to Rome, that after all would not make them true if found and proved at Mount Melleray, where they came from, to be utterly false and malicious, and to be absolutely without foundation or a particle of truth in their origin and start; just as the false coin does not become genuine metal because it has passed through many hands. As already seen in the letter of June 12, 1901, this was what had occurred in 1898 and 1900, when Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus White came and examined the charges on the spot at Mount Melleray. They were then all found to be utterly malicious and untrue. Hence, if this new campaign were to succeed, it was necessary that I should be blackened and slandered in the community too, and that the members of the community should be turned against me, or so terrorized and intimidated, that I might never again be able to prove by means of their evidence my own innocence and the guilt and culpability of my calumniators.

But there was one great obstacle to this—the same that they encountered in the secular church, where I was hearing nearly all the confessions. Though there were eight or nine confessors at Mount Melleray for the members of the community, I was confessor for two-thirds of the professed choir brethren and priests; and, as long as this continued, they knew that it was impossible for them to carry out to the full their attacks on me inside the community. Their first object, then, was to prevent all these, or as many as possible of them, from going to confession to me, just as they had tried to do it in the secular church. This they endeavoured to do, first, by spreading through the community most frightful calumnies about me as a confessor, thinking that this would prevent any penitent who believed them from going to confession to me. When this, however, failed, and when in spite of their calumnies all continued coming to confession to me, then those that came to me were threatened with the opposition and hostility of the party, unless they left me; and the door of the apartment where I heard the confessions was constantly watched, and some of the party came there regularly to force the penitents to leave. In consequence of this two or three, who were at the mercy of the party, or more or less in their power, had to cease coming, but not without first telling me the cause of it, and expressing their great regret that they had to do it; for that, otherwise, the party would make their lives in the Monastery intolerable; adding also, that as soon as there was an end to this sort of thing, they would come back again to confession to me. Then every one who continued to go to confession to me was, without exception, marked out for vengeance. And as the party could talk and plot and conspire against them, while their lips, like mine, were

sealed and their tongues had to be silent, life in the community became for them almost a living martyrdom. To add to it, those coming to confession to me were now accused of carrying stories to me in the confessional. For, just as outside, so inside the Monastery, there was no escape from their unbridled tongues, backed up, as they were, by such a lawless and unrestrained party. Though the Abbot knew all this, and deplored the fact that such things should go on in the Monastery, he seemed absolutely powerless to put a stop to any of it. It went on, therefore, without obstacle or hindrance, and was done in the end so openly that every member of the community had full knowledge of it.

It must be remembered, however, that the principal object of the party in all this was that they might have free scope for all their calumnies and slanders, even inside the Monastery and through the community. Then, a regular and continuous torrent of the worst stories came from the outside—when they had gone their rounds there, and were supposed to have done their work, and were poured through the community by the party. There was a daily supply of them, brought from the college, and sent through the Monastery; while other supplies came every morning from the lodge and the shop, and from the ladies' and gentlemen's guest houses.

By these means and through other agencies the calumnies and slanders, inside and outside and everywhere, were made to appear to coincide with and corroborate one another; and at the same time, they were varied and changed, increased or modified to suit the different localities and the different classes of persons among whom they were circulated. This whole system of attack then, both inside the Monastery and outside, seemed now as complete as perverted human ingenuity could make it, and their whole machinery was working everywhere full time and at full speed. No one, indeed, unacquainted with the place, and its circumstances and surroundings, could have any adequate idea of it. They, therefore, thought that at last they could easily strike me down at the next Regular Visitation; and that nobody, or at most very few, in the Monastery would now dare, in opposition to them, to give any evidence whatever in my favour.

III

BUT with all these elaborate plans and schemes they were sorely mistaken. The great body of the community saw clearly what was going on; and being thoroughly disgusted and indignant at it, they were only biding their time until the opportunity should come for

putting an end to it. At the next Visitation and enquiry, therefore, in 1903, their whole plan of attack broke down; their scandalous and irregular conduct, and their treacherous plottings and plannings were all laid bare to the Visitor; the dishonesty and malice of the calumnies and charges they had so elaborately concocted, and so long and carefully hatched, were now fully exposed and their falsehood fully proved, not only by the overwhelming testimony of the members of the community, but by numerous letters and other evidence that came through the Abbot or otherwise from the outside.

That enquiry completely and thoroughly vindicated my conduct and every one of my acts, not only inside the Monastery, but outside as a confessor in the public church where I was employed; for it was the false stories about what occurred there that were carried into the Monastery, and were now proved there to be utterly groundless and malicious. Moreover, this complete vindication of my character and conduct at Mount Melleray proved also the falsehood and malice of the charges they made against me before the General Chapter and in Rome, and convicted my accusers and calumniators everywhere, for what was false in the case at Mount Melleray could not possibly be true at Rome or anywhere else. And the very fact of their being secretly sent to the General Chapter and to Rome against me, after they had been proved so false and unfounded at Mount Melleray, only showed the uncharitable spirit of those who sent them and got them sent to these places.

This, however, was not the only exposure of their calumnies and slanders, and of the allegations they were still making against me in Rome. We shall prove it all over again by evidence from the outside. This will be the work of the three succeeding chapters where things will be more fully and clearly developed. And then, in the chapter that follows, we shall again prove it at the Bishop's sworn investigation, thus, everywhere, turning all their own artillery against themselves.

CHAPTER VI

I

I now proceed to give some of the oral and documentary evidence, particularly from the outside, which at the many searching and exhaustive enquiries at Mount Melleray, as well as in Rome and at the General Chapter in France, then refuted and disproved the false and malicious charges and allegations they brought against me; proving, moreover, that it was my accusers and calumniators who were throughout, and in every respect, the guilty culprits.

But, besides showing how thoroughly and completely this was then proved, there is a still stronger reason for giving the evidence here and now. Refuting and disproving these false and groundless charges at this stage of the proceedings, and exposing the malice with which they were then made is, as I have already said, like stamping the base coin, so that we shall know it when it turns up once more in Rome, and recognize it there as false and counterfeit, no matter in whose hands it is found or how they may try to palm it off on us. These charges and accusations, therefore, being now stamped and branded as they were with the indelible mark of "false and counterfeit," when we find the men in Rome, though knowing and seeing this, still deliberately using them against me, we must at once recognize that they, too, if not themselves false coiners in the case, are certainly, from start to finish, deliberate traders and traffickers in what they knew to be "false and counterfeit"; in other words, that they were throughout the guilty accomplices of my convicted calumniators at Mount Melleray. This circumstance, as we shall see when we come to the trials in Rome in 1907, gives the present evidence a preponderating importance in the case, which enhances its value beyond measure. It is only, however, when we come to these trials that this can be adequately realized.

I must further say that, from 1904 to 1908, I wrote the French letters of the then Abbot of Mount Melleray, and translated into French for him the evidence that will be given here; and that the originals of this evidence and of these documents were then sworn to, and forwarded to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in Rome, either through the General Chapter of the Order in France, the General's Office in Rome, or directly through its own secretary. To secure their delivery in Rome they had often to be sent through all these channels, and to be sent more than once through some of them. So that, unless deliberately purloined or destroyed, they must be still either in the archives of the Sacred Congregation or at the General's Office in Rome.

II

THE period covered by the evidence here given, and the incidents dealt with in what follows, commenced with a charge or denunciation made to Rome against me, in 1898, by the confessor who, as Abbot Eugene has told us, knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, and constantly boasted that, by sending many accusations to Rome, no matter whether they were true or false, he could get me

condemned there, when the opportune time came, under the guise of its being done "for the sake of peace."

This first accusation was "that I had impeded the liberty of the faithful in the choice of their confessors, and that I had spoken hurtful words, and caused fear to young girls because they did not come to confession to myself."

Now how did this charge arise, and what evidence was there to support it? The cases for which he then denounced me to Rome were founded on the conduct of the women and girls that he and his party had kept in the church, preventing the penitents from going to confession to me, and abusing and attacking them before they went to confession to me and after they returned. But more than fifty witnesses testified that I had never interfered with any of these disturbers nor given any of them the least cause of fear, nor had I spoken a single word to any of them. On the contrary, all the witnesses testified to the great patience and forbearance I had shown, under most trying and provoking circumstances. Moreover, the Father who sent these accusations against me could never, at any of the investigations that were held both before and after these accusations, produce a single witness, nor one tittle of evidence of any kind, to support any of his charges; nor could he produce a single case where I had interfered with anyone, or cause fear to anybody. The only case he ever attempted to produce was the one already given of the pretended "Miss Aherne of Cork," where he and his accomplice at the lodge sent this girl to abuse and browbeat me in the confessional. But that case, as we have seen, completely recoiled on himself; for the evidence showed that, instead of my having said hurtful words or caused fear to this girl, it was she that came to the confessional to attack and abuse me, and, as we have already seen, it was proved that she was instigated thereto, and sent to do it, by this Father and his accomplice at the lodge.

But to disprove these charges it is only necessary to quote Abbot Eugene's report. He declares, in 1901, that all the accusations made by this Father against me—and this was one of them—are false; that they spring from pride and envy, and from jealousy and spite on his part, and that it was this Father himself and his confederates that were guilty of the things of which he accused me. Several instances of this will be given as we proceed. In addition to all this, at every one of these searching enquiries—and this is perhaps the most important point of all—it was not only proved that I was entirely innocent of the charges they were bringing against me, but also that it was absolutely impossible that I could have been guilty of any of them. For I spoke to no one, and this Father and all those who

brought these charges against me knew it. From the beginning I had bound myself by the strict rules of silence, so that, outside the confessional, I could speak to no one, either in the church or elsewhere, without special and express permission from the Abbot. And all the evidence ever produced proved that I strictly observed this rule, no case of violating it having ever been made against me. This was the reason why all these groundless charges were so easily proved, at the visitations and enquiries held by Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus at the Monastery in 1898, 1900 and 1903, to be not only glaringly false and malicious but also absurd and ridiculous.

III

THIS, however, was only the beginning of the campaign. Let us next see how it was carried on and how it was met. Ninety per cent of the students at the college were going to confession to me, but all except three or four who were more firm willed than the rest, were now coerced and compelled to go to the other confessors. Many of them, however, when they got a chance, came in secret to confession to me in the Angels' Chapel, a secluded place where they could come without being seen. And so great was the aversion that most of the students had for the confessors to whom they were compelled to go, and so intense was their indignation at this coercion, that many gave up confession and communion altogether, while some of them went to communion, when they went at all, without confession. The result of all this was that the state of morality at the college became so bad and scandalous, and the matter became so public, that the Abbot had to cause some of these students to be expelled. And one of these expelled students was the principal agent of the party for watching my confessional and keeping the students from coming to confession to me. Here is one of the many letters which showed the sort of coercion that was used with regard to the students:

“ST JOHN'S COLLEGE,
“WATERFORD.

“To the Lord Abbot, Mount Melleray,

“I, E. B. now a theological student in St John's College, Waterford, and in Minor Orders, declare that I was a student in Mount Melleray when Mr McG., now a Brother in your community, was prefect of studies there. I remember one Sunday when I was waiting for confession at the confessional of Father Isidore, to whom I had always gone to confession, and when I had already gone into the

confessional box, Mr McG. as prefect came to Father Isidore's confessional and compelled other students to go away from it, sending them to another confessor. I then left Father Isidore's confessional, fearing to be caught there, and I too went to the other confessor. For months after that I did not dare to go back to Father Isidore, but after Mr McG. had entered your community, I went back to confession to Father Isidore and continued to go to confession to him until I left the college.

“ (Signed) E. B.”

The Mr McG. mentioned in this letter admitted that he had been employed, or rather compelled, to prevent the students from going to confession to me. But through fear of the factionists—for he was now a member of the community—he dare not venture to give evidence in these cases. Another prefect, Mr R., had also to watch my confessional, prevent the students from going to confession to me, and make them go to the other two confessors. When interrogated on the subject, he said he would not do such a thing if he could help it, and that, if he were free, it was to me to whom he would go to confession as he had always done.

All this time students were secretly sending written notes to me—sometimes through the Abbot, and sometimes through one of the professors at the college who was not an accomplice of the party in the business—begging me to hear their confessions in the Angels' Chapel, where they could not be seen. Several of these letters and notes were produced at the various enquiries that were held, and the facts were also proved by independent witnesses. This was how the Abbot first came to the knowledge of what was going wrong at the college, and then he probed the matter to the bottom for himself. The Abbot testified to all this at the enquiries at Mount Melleray, and proved it on oath at the trials in Rome in 1908.

But in connexion with the college there is a far worse case than any of these, and one that was public and notorious. It will be best given in the words of one of those who deposed to the facts.

“ MOUNT MELLERAY,
“ April 6, 1908.

“ I, N. C., hereby testify that, in 1900, I was a domestic servant in the boarding house for the students at Mount Melleray. I remember the first January in that year, when Father Isidore came to hear the dying confession of Mrs O'Neill, the matron of the college, and to administer the last Sacraments to her. Father Isidore, on that occasion, was met at the door by J. R. who said to him that he

had orders not to allow him into the boarding house, or to see Mrs O'Neill at all. Father Isidore in reply said that he was urgently sent for by Mrs O'Neill, who, he understood, was in a dying state, and crying out for confession and the last Sacraments; that he had also specific and express orders from the Abbot to hear her confession, and to attend to her, and that he would insist on doing his duty. J. R. declared that he had equally express and specific orders not to allow Father Isidore into the boarding house, or to see Mrs O'Neill, but he would not give the name of the person from whom he had the order; and in the end J. R. had to give way, and Father Isidore heard Mrs O'Neill's confession and administered the last Sacraments to her. Mrs O'Neill lingered on until March 5 following, and during the intervening time she had to go twice in her weak and almost dying state to the church to confession to Father Isidore, for we were afraid to bring him to the boarding house, and she would have no other confessor. She died on March 5, without confession, or any of the last Sacraments of the Church, and without any priest at all, because it was Father Isidore she wanted and no other priest, and we dare not send for him. I have personal knowledge of all these things, having seen and heard them; and I am prepared to give sworn testimony of them, if the Sacred Congregation requires it. I authorize the publication of this declaration and that it be forwarded to the Sacred Congregation.

“(Signed) N. C.”

Three sworn witnesses, including the Abbot himself, bore testimony that this case was public and notorious at Mount Melleray; and there are plenty of witnesses to prove it still. What could be worse? Yet it was a case where I had been secretly accused of impeding the liberty of this dying woman in the choice of her confessor.

I had always been hearing the confessions of all the children at the boys' primary school attached to the Monastery. But now, except two or three, they also were prevented from coming to confession to me, until it became known to all the children, and to the teachers and most of the parents, as well as to the Abbot that bad confessions were being made, owing to the fear the children had of the confessors to whom they were compelled to go. Then the person who compelled them to go to the other confessors had to permit them to go back to confession to me, asking me now to take particular care of them. They all came back to me, and continued doing so until I had to leave Mount Melleray in 1908. To complete matters, all the children at the girls' primary school had always come to confession to me; but they were now every one compelled to go to

one of the other confessors. They only went once or twice to him. Then all refusing to go any more, they came back to confession to me, and until I left Mount Melleray, six years after, they continued without intermission to do so.

Owing to my circumstances and to the secrecy with which they were carrying on their operations, it was not always easy to find out and prove who precisely the individuals were that were doing these things. However, though most carefully concealed behind the screens, the leader of the party, and principal instigator of the attacks on me, was caught red-handed at the evil work in the case of the children preparing for first communion at the girls' school.

It occurred in this way. The first communicants at that school, as at the other schools, always came to confession to me. They had already commenced again to come to confession to me, in order to prepare for their first communion. They were, however, strictly forbidden to go any more to me, and were compelled to go to another confessor. As the children could not make satisfactory confessions to the confessor to whom they were compelled to go, the parents complained bitterly of this, many of them writing and complaining to the Abbot about it. They wrote also complaining of the teachers' conduct, thinking all the time that it was her fault.

Then the teacher herself complained that she had been coerced by the leader of the faction to do it, though she knew it was quite wrong, and had long and stoutly refused to do it for him, knowing well, as she did, the many evils that were sure to follow from it, and the bad purpose for which it was done. The leader's conduct, as is usual with such people, was doubly mean and treacherous in this case. When the matter was discovered and complained of, thinking that, owing to the rule of silence by which we were bound, the real facts of the case could never be unearthed or his part in it discovered, he was the first to blame and condemn the teacher, saying that he would reprimand her for it himself. But in the end he had to admit that it was himself who had secretly coerced and compelled her to do it. In this manner he was always hiding behind others, just as when he falsely quoted Brother Paul at my profession. And, in most cases, it was quite easy for him to escape detection, for he was speaking to every one, and I could speak to nobody. This explains the audacity with which these things were done for they thought they had the field everywhere to themselves.

Now they denounced me to Rome in every one of these cases regarding the students and the children at the primary schools, accusing me of impeding their liberty in the choice of their confessors and of speaking hurtful words and causing fear to the children

of the female schools, because they would not choose myself for their confessor. And, in Rome, where they thought they could do it secretly and never be contradicted, they sought to make it appear that these students and children were always going to other confessors; but that I so terrorized them that they had to come to confession to me. These are some of the cases to which Abbot Eugene refers in his report to the Abbot-General, when he says that he examined the denunciations then made against me and found them all false and malicious, and that they had nothing to sustain their false charges, except groundless assertions without any proof, and, moreover, that these false assertions showed their want of charity, their pride and their jealousy, and the other evil motives by which they were actuated. He ends this declaration by stating that the men making these false charges in Rome against me were themselves the persons guilty of the very things of which they accused me.

But when my accusers in these cases were now found guilty on all the counts, the officials in Rome secretly withdrew these malicious accusations, as if they had never been made against me in order to screen them from the punishment that was their due according to the laws of the Church and the Constitutions of the Order, thereby affording a safe escape from punishment to the convicted calumniators and disturbers. But ten years after, as we shall see, thinking that we could no longer prove the real facts, and, in fact, that we could have no opportunity of doing so, they renewed every one of these charges against me in Rome. Suppressing then the fact that my innocence, and the guilt of my accusers and calumniators, had been now so overwhelmingly established, suppressing also the evidence proving this, which they had in their own office and before their own eyes, the officials in Rome sought, in 1907, to condemn me in secret on the bare fact that these false accusations had been made against me. And then, when their own criminal conduct in doing this was discovered and proved, they once more withdrew these charges and the evidence that refuted and disproved them, in order to save themselves also from exposure and conviction. This is what gives the facts and evidence, which we now produce, a very special signification, and a meaning of paramount importance in the case. The extraordinary conduct, and the glaring guilt of these officials in Rome in this matter, as in many others, cannot, however, be fully exposed until we come to deal with what they did there in 1904 and 1905, and again at the trials in 1907 and 1908.

CHAPTER VII

I

WE next give documentary and other evidence showing how they tried to prevent the penitents from coming to confession to me, and how, when the penitents would not go to the other confessors but insisted on coming to confession to me, they attacked them for it. Then come proofs of the many calumnies they were spreading against me, and how, at the same time, they were turning every one of the very clearest proofs of my innocence and of their own culpability into fresh charges and allegations against me.

For example, when the charge of "impeding the liberty of the faithful in the choice of their confessors and of using hurtful words to young girls and causing them fear, because they would not choose me as confessor" was proved in Rome to be so false, so groundless and so malicious, and that it was my accusers themselves that were glaringly guilty of the very things with which they charged me, instead of being punished for it in Rome as the laws of the Church distinctly prescribe that they should be, they there turned these overwhelming proofs of my innocence and of the guilt of my accusers into new charges against me, of having watched the penitents for fear they might go to other confessors. They alleged that, otherwise, I could not have known that these penitents were prevented from coming to confession to myself. They also manufactured out of them another false charge of being jealous about penitents and of showing a preference for hearing the confessions of women; alleging that my watching them and my complaints about their being prevented from coming to myself, proved this. They ignored, of course, the fact that it was not myself at all, but the penitents that complained of the interference and proved it against them, and that then I, and the Abbot also, were bound to take note of it, in order to have peace in the church and at the confessional, and more particularly in order, in my case, to defend myself when falsely accused by them. So that these new charges really amounted to making it a crime on my part to dare to attempt to defend myself at all against them. Then again, because these respectable penitents went to confession to me they made this the ground and occasion of secretly accusing me in Rome of refusing to hear the confessions of the poor people, and of chasing them away from the confessional; when, as was proved on oath on several occasions, they knew and everybody at Mount Melleray knew, that I was practically hearing the confessions of all the poor people and refusing none of them.

When they were once more found guilty of making these unfounded charges, and of knowing them to be false; the accusation in Rome then was that I was getting information about my brethren in religion and about their conduct from the penitents whose confessions I heard. They ignored the fact that it was other members of the community, including the Abbot, as well as visitors and strangers, and not myself, who produced all the evidence that proved their guilt. They thus sought, in Rome, to make every proof of my innocence a new demonstration of my guilt of a dozen other imaginary things that they concocted in their own minds. And then, as we shall see, I was to get no opportunity in Rome of refuting any of these new and totally unfounded charges.

And when all this failed them, turning a new page and ignoring all the past, the men at Mount Melleray denied ever having accused me of anything; the men in Rome backing them up in this also, by withdrawing their charges against me, and the evidence that proved their guilt. The allegation now was that, being insane, I had only imagined that they had accused me of these things.

It is Abbot Eugene's letter that lets us see how easy it was for them to continue to carry on this sort of campaign to any length in Rome, so long as they had their friends and confederates there to assist them, for he tells us how, when the calumniators and accusers are caught, their defamatory letters are thrown into the wastepaper basket, so that they go free and can commence again. But in our case, it was far worse still: for, as we shall see, not only were the convicted calumniators allowed to go free, but the evidence that proved my complete innocence and their guilt was all being rigorously suppressed or destroyed; and then, when the opportune time came, I was to be condemned and punished on their false evidence or without any evidence at all, in order that the guilt of my accusers and of their abettors in Rome might never be disclosed. After 1900, this was their programme, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome; and, as we see from what Abbot Eugene has said about the Father who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, they made little or no secret about it, for they thought we were blind to it or at least powerless against them.

This programme worked very well for them, as long as the Abbot allowed things to go on in the old way. But after the enquiry of 1900, and especially after he had received from Abbot Eugene the report of June 12, 1901, as given above, showing the unfair way in which I was being treated, the Abbot of Mount Melleray had to rouse himself to greater vigilance. He could no longer fail to see the evil and destructive courses the two confessors and those who were

plotting and intriguing with them were pursuing, particularly in their intercourse with the people in the church and elsewhere outside. He came to know it all practically; because, as he has himself testified and as the evidence shows, when he did not see it himself, large numbers of most respectable visitors at the Monastery were writing and complaining of it. At the enquiry of 1903, he had, therefore, to testify to it all, as he had also to do on oath on the occasion of the trials in Rome; but, at the same time, protesting that he was powerless to remedy these things, owing to the action of the Abbots of the General Chapter and of certain officials in Rome, protecting, shielding and encouraging, if not actually urging on the evildoers at Mount Melleray.

It was, therefore, through the Abbot that most of the evidence that we now give was procured; and what we have already said shows the necessity of giving it so fully here, in order to leave them no loopholes in Rome for escape when the time comes for detecting them there, for had there been the least opening, as we shall see, they would surely have slipped through.

II

HERE then is the report that the Abbot had to make to the Regular Visitor and to Rome, after investigating a case in which I was accused of forcing a lady to come to confession to myself. And in this case I was not only accused in Rome of impeding the liberty of the penitent in the choice of her confessor but of showing a preference for hearing the confessions of women:—"Mrs J., on the occasion of the death of a near relative, came over from London to Ireland, and then came here to Mount Melleray to make a week's retreat and a general confession to Father Isidore. She was kneeling on the right-hand side of the church near the Holy Water font when Father Isidore went out to his confessional, and she got up to consult him there about her retreat and confession. But the Brother who was always in the church was standing in the corner at the right-hand side of the entrance door. This Brother made very threatening signs to her, shook his fist at her, and beckoned her to go to confession, to Father J——" (the priest who denounced me to Rome), striking himself on the breast and putting his fingers to his lips, to signify the confession. The Brother then went out from the corner, and stood between her and Father Isidore's confessional to prevent her from going there. Instead of going to the other confessor she went out of the church, being, in the circumstances, afraid to go past the Brother to Father Isidore. About an hour after she sent

word to Father Isidore to meet her in the church, and she went into the church and knelt on the left-hand side between the altar and Father Isidore's confessional. This time, the Brother rushed from the door where he had again concealed himself and stood again in front of her, beckoning her to go back and placing his clenched fist quite near her face. She went out to the lodge and asked to see me; but the Brother there told her that I could not be seen. She then went home, and, a fortnight or so after, came back and made her retreat and confession to Father Isidore. Two priests and three laymen who all witnessed what had occurred in the church, and the lady herself testified to the facts as above stated."

This declaration was made by the late Abbot, and the facts of the case were again proved at the Regular Visitation in 1903, and on oath at the Bishop's sworn enquiry in 1904.

Here are the letters of two nuns that I was accused of coercing in order to make them go to confession to myself. They speak for themselves; and these two cases were brought up against me three or four times, because they thought I would not like to ask nuns to bear testimony exculpating me. But the Abbot had to do it in the end.

"CORK,

"May 15, 1907.

"To the Lord Abbot of Mount Melleray,

"I remember when I was at Cappoquin, several attempts were made at Mount Melleray to prevent me from going to confession to Father Isidore. I always indignantly resisted these attempts and always went of my own choice to Father Isidore to confession.

"(Signed) Sister M. E."

"PARIS,

"May 28, 1907.

"I beg to state that about seven years ago I went from Dublin to Mount Melleray with Mrs K. and Mrs G. I intended to go to confession to Father Isidore, and to make a few days' retreat under his spiritual guidance; and so I arranged to see him in the confessional on the morning after my arrival. Having to wait some time in the morning, and fearing that Father Isidore might have forgotten, I asked the Brother, who was passing, if he would tell Father Isidore that I wanted to see him for confession. The Brother put his finger to his lips to signify that he could not speak, and at the same time beckoned to me to follow him. At first I refused, but afterwards I followed him to the gallery, where he pointed to a confessional

and gave me to understand that I must wait and go to confession there. Not knowing the regulations I thought that probably Father Isidore sometimes heard confessions on the gallery, and so I waited; but to my surprise another priest came out instead of Father Isidore. I went into the confessional and said, 'You are not Father Isidore, are you, Father?' He answered 'No.' So I begged he would excuse me, as I had arranged to go to confession to Father Isidore and that the Brother brought me there. I thought it strange of the Brother to do such a thing, as it clearly showed that he wanted to force me to go to another confessor instead of the one to whom I wished, and had arranged, to go.

“(Signed) SISTER M. R.”

I give also an extract from a letter which this same nun wrote to me when she heard of the accusations made against me, for in all these cases they accused me of forcing these penitents to go to confession to myself. I have still the original of the letter from which the extract is taken. She says: “I wrote a letter to the Abbot and sent him a declaration which he will probably show you, and I gave him permission to publish its contents. I am sorry to find you accused of an act you could never be guilty of. It is very sad that, even in religion, jealousy has its victims; but, when one does a little good around him, others think that it is prejudicial to themselves, and so the persecution begins. I wonder if you forget when I first asked you to undertake my spiritual direction during the few days I spent at Mount Melleray, how you tried in your humility to persuade me that others were far more capable and competent to do so than you.” And these were the penitents whose liberty of choosing their confessor I was accused of impeding, and of forcing and compelling them to leave the other priest's confessional, and come to confession to myself.

Then come a number of letters showing some of the calumnies they were spreading about me from the lodge and the shop, and above all from the college. They show also how they tried to prevent penitents from going to confession to me, and how, when the penitents would not go to the other confessors but came to me, they attacked them for it. And in all these cases I was accused of asking and forcing these people to go to confession to myself, and of thereby showing a preference for hearing the confessions of women. The only reason why I was accused of these things was: that, though threatened and coerced to make them do so, these people would not go to one or other of the two confessors who were so anxious for respectable penitents.

Here is the letter of Mrs M. K. of Gerald Griffiths Street, Cork. In it we have not only the intimidation and the interfering with confession, but some of the calumnies and slanders, for it is impossible to split up the letters in order to put the proofs under their various headings.

“ December 8, 1905.

“ To the Lord Abbot of Mount Melleray.

“ I declare as follows:—I went to Mount Melleray in June or July in 1900. I only spent a few hours there, but at the shop and lodge where there was a priest and a brother respectively in charge of these places, and in their presence and encouraged by them, I heard a number of young girls speaking very badly and contemptuously of Father Isidore. Some of them said he was insane, and beating and abusing people in the church, and that he could be heard scolding and lacerating the penitents in the confessional. In the presence of the father and brother, and encouraged by them, these girls warned me for my life not to go to confession to him; and they followed me to the church and tried to force me to go to a priest on the gallery. For peace sake I went for some time on the gallery, thinking that then I could go quietly down to confession to Father Isidore. But they did not leave, and I would not go to confession to the priest on the gallery, but went down to Father Isidore's confessional, and went to confession to him. The girls following me down, came to the confessional after me, and continued so near it, speaking and disturbing it so much, that both I and Father Isidore had to leave. I felt this most difficult and disagreeable, for they abused and threatened me after I went out, telling me also that they heard my confession. I then made ‘ The Stations of the Cross ’ and the girls left. Father Isidore came out again, and I made a general confession and felt very happy and pleased.

“ I returned that evening on the boat from Cappoquin to Youghal. There was a stout woman on the boat with yellow hair; she had children with her and they seemed to be her own. But there were also with her two of the girls who followed me to the church. I had seen this woman very intimate and familiar with the fathers and brothers at the lodge and shop of the Monastery. On the boat, the whole time she and the girls were speaking very badly of Father Isidore; saying to every one that he was mad and beating and abusing the people in the church, and saying many other things about him that I knew to be false. I thought her language terrible anywhere, but particularly on a public boat. She was constantly quoting the

fathers and brothers at the college with whom she pretended to be very intimate, and to have heard from them what she was saying about Father Isidore.

“ (Signed) M. K.”

This evidence was corroborated by the sworn testimony of Brother B., a friend of Mrs K., and Mrs K. made a second deposition on her death-bed reiterating her former one as given above, for the above letter was sent to the General Chapter in France, and the second declaration had to be got and formally signed, and attested, for the Sacred Congregation in Rome.

The following is another declaration made by a young woman in America:

“ I remember going to Ireland some years ago. I visited Mount Melleray then, in the company of Miss M. V. of Boston. We went to confession to Father Isidore before dinner, and at the dinner table there were with us two young girls and the Brother who was attending at the table. One of the young girls was speaking most disrespectfully of Father Isidore all the time, and making allegations against him that we knew to be false, and which we considered to be very unjust and very injurious to him. As we had known beforehand, and found also for ourselves, that Father Isidore was a good and painstaking confessor and a holy priest, we made complaints of this girl's language and conduct to the Brother in charge; and we repeatedly demanded of him the name of this young girl. He indignantly refused to give the name until we insisted that we must see the Abbot or get the name. He gave the name then, and we sent the name and facts in writing to Father Isidore for the Abbot. The young girl, who was speaking in this manner, said that she used to come every month or fortnight to Mount Melleray, and that every time she came she spent a long time with some of the monks at the college.

“ (Signed) M. A. O'C.”

I may say that these two Americans before they left Mount Melleray sent me the written statement above referred to, and this written statement was one of the documents seized upon and carried away by Abbot John, the Special Inquisitor sent, as we shall see, by the General Chapter and the Sacred Congregation to Mount Melleray in 1906. He left no copy of it behind; thinking, in this way, to prevent me from being able to prove what was going on. And this document that he carried away was destroyed by himself or some one else; for

when, in 1907, my lawyer tried to find it in Rome, it was not to be found among the papers delivered by him. This was why the letter had to be got from America.

The Brother at the lodge notified the young girl mentioned in the letter given above that her name had been discovered, and that the Abbot and myself knew all she had said and done. She then sent her mother to apologize and promise in her name that such things would never be done again, and that she would make all the reparation she could for the past. She acknowledged at the same time that this had been going on for years, and that it was done at the instigation of some of the monks. This was plain also from the statement made by the American girls when at the Monastery. Hundreds of other cases like these were discovered, and sworn evidence of many of them was forwarded to Rome. Evidence was also forwarded that numbers of girls, whose names could never be discovered, were secretly kept by this Brother at the same work, and that he refused to give their names, abusing those who asked for them, as he did in the case of these American girls until they insisted on seeing the Abbot or getting the names.

Here is the written retraction and declaration, made to the Abbot by Mrs H., a cousin of one of the priests of the Monastery:—"I, Mrs H., feel myself bound to make the following declaration in justice to Father Isidore. I was told by one of the fathers at the college to tell the ladies at the guest-house and at the lodge not to go to Father Isidore for confession, for that he was a deceitful and dishonest Northern, and that nobody knew who he was, or what he was before he came to Mount Melleray. I regret to say that, without reflection, I foolishly did what I was told, and I am now heartily sorry for it.

"I was told that Father Isidore was a drunken priest and insane, and that he was often suspended before he came to Mount Melleray; but I believe and hope that I did not repeat this to anyone, for I always felt that it was false and wrong. At the dinner table, in the presence of the brothers there, I heard girls say worse things than even these against Father Isidore; but I prefer not to give names, particularly as I know they can be easily obtained otherwise.

"I am now well aware of the falsehood and wickedness of these things, and of their great injustice to Father Isidore; and as I may, though I do not remember it, have repeated them, I therefore feel myself bound to make this retraction and declaration of them all and to declare that I know them to be false and malicious.

"I had always gone to Father Isidore to confession before this and had always found him to be an excellent priest and confessor. For some time, owing to what I had done, I was afraid to go back to

confession to him; besides I was warned not to go to him, and I went to another confessor to whom I was directed by one of the monks.

"I have now, however, gone back to confession to Father Isidore, told him what I had done against him and, without being asked to do it, I voluntarily promised to make the reparation which I have now tried to do as far as I could."

The above declaration was the result of enquiries and investigations into these matters held by the Abbot; and it was, I understand, made at his request and suggestion, for it was now necessary for him to have positive proofs of these things. The facts of this case were also proved at Abbot Eugene's enquiry in 1903 and on oath at the Bishop's sworn enquiry in 1904.

Here are two other letters that the Apostolic Inquisitor carried away in 1906, as he did that of the two American girls. He evidently thought that he had left no copy of these letters behind him. The Abbot, however, had rough copies, as they, too, were the result of his own investigations into charges made against me on the subject by one of the confessors. These letters were the more important as the Abbot recorded on them that this confessor had charged me with asking and forcing these two ladies to go to confession to myself, and that I thereby showed a preference for hearing the confessions of women. He also recorded that the letters proved there was a conspiracy between some person or persons at the lodge, who had told these ladies to which father they must go for confession; and this father accusing me knew that they were told to go to himself for confession. The first letter is as follows:

"I, Mrs C. of Dungarvin, County Waterford, declare that it is not true that Father Isidore ever asked me, or forced me, or in any way coerced me, to go to confession to himself, or that he ever spoke to me in the church before or after the confession. I was told and warned at the lodge to go to Father A——" (this was the Father making the accusations against me), "but I went to Father Isidore instead, when he came out; because I believed every one was free to go to whatever confessor they might select themselves."

Here is the second letter by an American lady:

"I, E. D., reside in America, but have been travelling in Europe for some time, and stopping in Rome with my brother, a priest, who is now at Melleray with me. Some folks at Mount Melleray warned me not to go to confession to Father Isidore but to Father A——" (the Father making the accusation).

"I was in the church when Father Isidore came out, and I went to confession to him at once. I noticed before going to confession, that I was being watched in the church, evidently to see to whom I was going for confession. I most solemnly declare that Father Isidore never spoke to me in the church, before confession or after it, and that he never in any way tried to force or get me to go to confession to himself. I am astonished that anyone should say otherwise, and I am not edified to see these things going on at Mount Melleray."

III

HERE is another of the accusations made against me by the same confessor. I give it, because, in many respects, it is very typical of the sort of things he used to do. Of course, it too, like all the rest, will turn up again among the charges that he brought against me in Rome.

There were five women in the public church, and I heard their confessions. I then went into the church in the interior of the Monastery; and the women having remained in the public church, there were then two walls between me and them. At this point the confessor in question went out to the public church, where the women were praying and making their thanksgivings after confession. He remained for a long time in his confessional, for he evidently did not then know that they had been at confession with me. None of them, of course, went to confession to him, though he tried all he could to attract their attention by peeping in and out at them. He then left the church, went to the Abbot inside and accused me of watching them through the keyhole of the door, lest they might go to confession to himself; saying that, from his confessional, he saw me peeping through the keyhole of the door, and that the women who likewise saw me were in consequence afraid to go to confession to him. He said he knew this by the way in which they were looking at the keyhole and at his confessional.

The Abbot went out at once to the church, and examined three of the women who were still there. He likewise got the evidence of the other two, who having left the church before he went out, were then at the lodge. All five testified that they had been at confession with me before this father went out, and that they did not see me, and could not possibly have seen anyone through the keyhole. The Abbot also examined the keyhole, and saw that it was an impossibility, as anyone can see to this day, for either the women or this father to see through it; they might as easily have seen through a stone wall.

This father was again convicted in the case at the inquisition held by the Regular Visitor and at the Bishop's sworn enquiry; for, besides the evidence, they could all see how impossible the thing was. It was after all this that he sent the charge against me to Rome, to show there that I was jealous about confessions, that I had a preference for hearing the confessions of women, and that I kept catching the penitents for fear they might go to the other confessors.

Here is another case which, though occurring at a later period, was used by the same confessor to prove that I had a preference for hearing the confessions of women, and that I refused to hear the confessions of men and particularly those of the poor and labouring people. For this, as we shall see, was another of the charges he brought against me in Rome. The facts of this case will be best given in the words of the report of the investigation regarding it which was made by the Abbot on the spot and at the time of the occurrence, and afterwards sworn to by him and sent to Rome. Here is the report: "Complaints were made to me by Father ——" (the person accusing me) "about the case of Patrick McGarth a farm labourer from Kilbenny near Michaelstown, whose confession he alleged Father Isidore had refused to hear. But at the same time complaints were also made to me by Patrick McGarth and Bridget his wife, through the brother at the lodge, that it was this father himself and not Father Isidore, that had refused to hear McGarth's confession; and that, as a matter of fact, Father Isidore had heard his confession after the other father had refused to do so.

"I discovered that, at the time, there were in the church only Patrick McGarth himself, his wife, and a young girl named Anne Ryan, and that the two latter had gone to confession to Father Isidore, so that the other father could have no excuse at all for refusing to hear this man's confession. Bridget McGarth was at confession with Father Isidore at the time the other confessor refused to hear her husband's confession. The witnesses in this case were Patrick McGarth himself and Bridget his wife, Anne Ryan and the Brother at the lodge."

Now, just as in the case of the students and the children at the schools, in every one of these cases, as well as in those that follow and in many others, the moment my innocence was established, and the guilt of my accusers proved, then the charges against me were secretly withdrawn in Rome, as if they had never been made at all, in order by this means to allow my convicted calumniators to escape the punishment they deserved, and to enable them, with a clean slate and untarnished character, to commence anew to make their

false accusations. But all these charges will again turn up against me at the trials in Rome, as if they were now proved to be true and genuine.

IV

It was not alone in the matter of making these charges and allegations that these men at Mount Melleray could act, all this time, with perfect impunity. They could do it in everything; and neither the Abbot nor anyone else, as the Abbot himself has testified and the facts prove, dare attempt to correct or punish them for it, as long as they had the men in Rome to shield and support them. In consequence of this they often did things that no one could imagine possible in a Cistercian Monastery.

For instance, the same confessor who was now denouncing me to Rome used to watch me, day after day, when returning from the church. Hiding behind the door leading from the public church into the Monastery he would slam it in my face when passing in and drive me back, so that I was obliged to go out again through the public church, and seek entrance elsewhere. When going out into the church, he would likewise follow me to the door, and, thinking he was unseen by anybody, he would suddenly bang it at my heels, sometimes even pitching me forward on my face and hands. When I passed through the narrow corridors and passages of the Monastery inside, he would, when he thought that no one was looking, follow me or meet me with most provoking and threatening gestures and groans, often standing before me in quite a fighting posture with his two clenched fists to my face, and impeding my way as I endeavoured to get past him. He evidently thought that he could in this way provoke me to some rash word or act and make this a charge of manifesting a violent and uncontrollable temper, particularly as they were now accusing me in Rome of being insane.

When, at the enquiry that followed soon after one of these attacks, he was, both by seculars and members of the community, proved guilty of doing these things, the only answer he had was that I was looking menacingly at him. In Rome, as we shall see, a quibble of this sort was quite enough to turn anything, or even nothing at all, into deadly evidence against me and to afford superabundant proofs of my guilt. But all the witnesses testified that they had seen me all the time, having watched the whole of the transactions unobserved; that I did nothing in the world to offend or provoke him, but that I was trying to get past in a most quiet and peaceful manner, and that they were edified at my self-restraint,

and wondered how I was able to preserve my patience so well. The principal witnesses in these cases were Brother J—— of the Monastery, who testified on oath to what this father did to me inside the Monastery, and Mr J—— C——, a student of the seminary, who, unobserved by him for a number of days, had, with many others, watched from the church gallery his conduct at the door leading from the public church to the Monastery. When this case was fully proved, instead of this father being corrected, the case and the evidence was withdrawn in Rome. And, then, five years after, suppressing the true facts and the evidence proving this man's guilt, the men in Rome brought this case against me as a proof of my insanity, so that we had to prove the whole case over again by the same evidence given on oath, proving at the same time in this case, as in every one of the others, that the men at Mount Melleray were boasting that this was being done for them in Rome through money and influence.

There are two other cases which were proved by the Abbot and must be mentioned here, as they are typical of the low and sordid things that these men, under shelter of protection from Rome, resorted in their endeavours to effect their designs against me. The first was the case of a woman from the neighbourhood of the Monastery who, for over twelve months, spent the Saturdays and the eves of holidays, when there were crowds coming for confession to the Monastery, watching almost every stranger as they came to the church, in order to rehearse to them the whole catalogue of false stories about me. This was often done in my own presence and hearing.

Dozens upon dozens of complaints and letters came to the Abbot about this person's conduct in the matter. But, though he tried his utmost, he could do nothing to stop her for he had no jurisdiction over her. After he endeavoured to stop it, she would only shout the things louder than ever. But at last, he found that, by order of one of the men most bitterly opposing me, this woman was receiving and carrying away from the almshouse of the Monastery loads of things that should have gone to the poor, many of the poor in consequence being sent away empty. When the Abbot put a stop to this, then the woman also stopped her visits and her railings.

The second case, of a somewhat similar kind but in the opposite direction, was that of one of the employees at the Monastery, who had charge of the church and attended to the strangers who visited it. One of the perquisites of his office, secured to him by contract, was an abundant supply from the Monastery of milk and bread for a large young family. But this man, who had been constantly in the

church, testified on oath to the misconduct there of the girls who came from the college, and from the lodge and shop, and to their interference with the penitents coming to confession to me; testifying also that in their regard I had acted with the utmost patience and self-restraint; that I had always heard almost all the confessions of the poor people and of the men; that it was for me that the poor people always asked when they came to church, and that I never, even once, refused to hear their confessions. After this, for two years the milk and bread were stopped, and the poor man was afraid by speaking of it to bring down more of the vengeance of the monks on himself and his family, until the Abbot himself discovered it and made amends. Thus not only were they heaping up all sorts of false charges and evidence against me, but no one was to be permitted, as far as they could prevent it, to give any evidence whatever in my favour. Proof of all this was sent to Rome but suppressed there, until we had by sworn evidence to prove it all over again in 1907.

CHAPTER VIII

I

BESIDES the letters I have already given many others were forwarded to the Sacred Congregation in Rome proving the same sort of things. There was, for example, a letter of Mrs F., the Catholic wife of a Protestant gentleman, enclosing another letter sent to her by a priest of the diocese of Waterford, in which he told her that he had got instructions from the priests and monks of Mount Melleray to warn her that she must not go to confession to Father Isidore any more, but to the confessor on the gallery. She sent this letter to the Abbot and he sent it to Rome through the General Chapter. There was the letter of Mrs B., and this was one of the letters seized upon and carried away by the Apostolic Inquisitor in 1906. In this letter Mrs B. made a solemn declaration that the same priest sent for herself and her husband to warn her in the most formal manner to go no more to Father Isidore for confession, but that she must go to the priest on the gallery. When she refused, he violently abused and threatened her, telling her then that she must go no more to Mount Melleray, and that if she went there again she would be turned away from the Monastery door by his friends at the Monastery. He afterwards sent for her husband by himself to force him to prevent his wife from going to confession to me. But both wife and husband indignantly resented his conduct, refused to listen to him and wrote to the Abbot informing him of it all. This secular priest was one of the old students constantly visiting at the lodge and

college, and, contrary to the rules of the Order, entertained there by the leader of the factionist party. Several other witnesses testified that he had reported of me that, before I went to Mount Melleray, I had been a drunken priest and insane. At the Monastery itself, and even in the church, similar language and threats were used by another secular priest. In this case, the Abbot took the evidence in writing from some of the people present, to show the sort of terrorism and intimidation that was going on. Evidence of the same kind was produced with regard to priests from Cork and some others from the diocese of Waterford.

This sort of thing was everywhere at the Monastery. Mrs G. of Mallow, Co. Cork, and several others, in letters to the Abbot which were forwarded to Rome, testified to its being carried on night after night at the ladies' lodging house, and that the girls who were doing these things for them there boasted that they were helped in all they were doing and saying by the brother at the lodge. And while, from the other places, it was only one or two at a time of the mendacious calumnies that were cautiously spread abroad, in the ladies' lodging house every night the whole catalogue of them was rehearsed to almost every new visitor, for they were quite sure that they were safe from detection there. These stories, too, were then packed off to Rome, and piled up and recorded there against me as public and notorious facts, after they had been proved to be so utterly false by scores of witnesses at Mount Melleray. At the trials in Rome in 1907 we shall find a superabundance of them there.

But there is one case in this category that must be specially noticed, for it will turn up again both at Mount Melleray and in Rome, and we shall have through it an excellent opportunity of exposing the barefaced dishonesty and unblushing effrontery with which these things were done.

There was one of the confessors who, at this period, had a number of women and girls almost constantly engaged in asking and forcing the penitents as they left my confessional, to go to his for a friendly conversation with him there. He had several times tried in this way to manufacture false charges against me. For instance, one of his ways of doing this was to send some of these penitents back again to me for certificates of their confessions, telling them if I refused to give the certificates at once to let him know and that he would report me for it. This had been reported to the Abbot by some of these penitents; and it was discovered that persons had been sent in this way for certificates of confession who had never been at confession with me at all. This, of course, was strictly forbidden, and contrary to the rules of the Order, and for it this Father was removed from the

confessional. Now, on one of these occasions, a girl from Cork was asked by a lady from Dublin to go to this father's confessional for one of these conversations. This girl came to me to ask permission, as she said, as a penitent of mine, to go to him for this conversation, telling me the story she had heard from the Dublin lady.

I had been warned beforehand against all this, both by the Abbot and Mrs A., with whom this girl had come to the Monastery, as her invited guest or lady's companion. She had always come to Mount Melleray with Mrs A. in this capacity, and had always gone away with her. She was to go away with her this time also, and was bound to do so by the Monastic rules as the time allowed for such visitors to stop at the Monastery had expired. But quite unexpectedly, the night before they were to leave, the girl informed Mrs A. that she was going to stop at Mount Melleray as a now specially invited guest. Mrs A. further learned that she was being kept, in order to be used by them for an attack on me in the church. These attacks, under one form or another, were now occurring constantly, and Mrs A. knew all about them. She, therefore, felt bound to warn the Abbot and myself about it, as it was she who had brought this girl to the Monastery. The Abbot then not only warned me of what was going on but directed me how to act.

When, therefore, she asked the permission I have described I told her that she knew quite well herself that she had the right to go to this father, or to anyone else, without any leave or permission from me; but that this sort of thing that was going on was enough to bring the tribunal of confession into contempt, and that the lowest characters, if they had any faith at all, would blush to be guilty of such things. This was the very least I could say, and it was what the Abbot had directed me to do. She then, knowing well for what purpose this father was inviting to his confessional the penitents going from mine, and now knowing, too, that I knew it, refused point blank to go near him.

The priest, who had got this girl to remain at the Monastery and do what she did, was the one most bitterly opposed to me from the first; and he now employed, first, a Dominican priest, one of the old pupils of the college, and then the brother at the lodge to force and compel this girl to write to the Abbot a false letter against me about the matter; for they did not know that the Abbot and myself knew all about the business from Mrs A. The brother at the lodge dictated what she was to write; and, as it appears, took charge of the letter lest she might change it, sending also a copy of it to Rome. I have never seen this letter; but the girl has acknowledged that there was not a word of truth in it. Sometime after this, she

repented of what she had done, and wrote to the Abbot retracting what she had written; detailing the infamous conduct in the business of the brother at the lodge, and describing it as most villainous and infamous, expressing at the same time her own heartfelt sorrow and repentance for what she had so foolishly done for him. She declared also that it was done under coercion and compulsion, and that I was perfectly innocent of what I was accused of in that letter, and perfectly justified in everything I had said and done; for she now knew that Mrs A. had informed myself and the Abbot of the whole circumstances of the case. But more than this, they had sent this same girl, who was well known in Dublin, to all the penitents there who were known to have come to confession to me at Mount Melleray, to tell them the same false story she had written to the Abbot and that they had sent to Rome.

This, of course, was done for the purpose of having the thing spread and made notorious. But in this case also she repented, retracted, and even wrote to myself of the wrongs she had done me in Dublin, and of the retractions she had made. I sent that letter through the General Chapter to the Sacred Congregation in Rome. A copy of the letter of retraction to the Abbot was also sent by him to Rome, but he kept the original of it for himself.

Now it will be seen at the inquisition held at Mount Melleray in January, 1906, the utterly dishonest and disreputable means by which they endeavoured to suppress these letters of retraction, while endeavouring to use the false and retracted one as damaging evidence against me, until they were detected and convicted in the very act, and had there and then to admit it. But, once more, we shall detect them doing the same thing over again in Rome in 1907, and again convict them there of it by means of a secret letter that came from Rome to the Abbot, and which will be also given.

II

For various reasons I had to refuse to hear the confessions of several women. Among others there were three whom I refused to hear, sending them to other confessors. The reason in their case was that, in the community and from the college and gentlemen's guest house, my adversaries had circulated the story that these three were telling me in the confessional what was going on between the monks and the women and girls at the lodge and college and in the shop, and about all that was occurring at the ladies' guest house, and that I was carrying these stories to the Abbot inside, thereby violating the seal of confession. Several, including the Abbot, testified to this

report having been circulated through the community by my adversaries; while the Abbot testified also that I never carried any such story in my life to him. That this was circulated likewise through the gentlemen's guest house, or, at least, its circulation encouraged and assisted there by one of the priests of the community, was testified to by two secular priests and an ecclesiastical student.

While the whole story was proved to be absolutely false and groundless, and while the Abbot testified that I never carried any such stories to him in my life, yet, as the only way by which I could protect myself and the tribunal of confession from this horrible calumny, I had, without revealing to them the reason why, to refuse to hear the confessions of these three women. I did this by advice of the Abbot.

Then the story was turned upside down by the very same people who had previously accused me of getting information from them in the confessional and carrying it to the Abbot. They now reported everywhere that I had violently abused and beaten these three because they would not go to confession to myself. This new version of the calumny actually went on for years against me. It was told to every one at the college on the pretended authority of these three women themselves, and of the person in charge of the ladies' lodging house. One of the confessors carried it to the gentlemen's guest house, and for years they had it told to almost every one coming there who did not know me. It was carried into the Monastery, and told again and again to every member of the community on the same alleged authority, the persons telling it always assuring everybody of its truth. During this time, though knowing all about it, I dared not open my lips to contradict it. It was literally belled all around the Monastery, spread everywhere through the neighbourhood and the neighbouring towns, and then sent to the Bishop of Waterford and to Rome. Now I insisted that, the thing having become thus public, these cases must be fully investigated and examined into. When they were examined, what was the result? It was that, instead of having beaten or abused them because they went to the other confessors, it was I myself that had sent them to the other confessors, and that I had to do so because members of the community and others were reporting that these three were carrying stories to me under cover of the confessional. It was proved also that I had never beaten, abused or spoken an angry word to them for this or anything else. How could I, when it was I myself who had sent them to the other confessors? We thus again see that, turn which way I might, there was no escaping from the unrestrained tongues of these miserable men and their agents and accomplices. Now, until detected there, both

of these false and contradictory stories under different heads and different dates, were recorded in Rome against me; and the evidence of their falsehood, their malice and their manifest contradictoriness proved at three separate official enquiries and on oath, was all suppressed in Rome, until we had to prove it all over again in 1907.

Here is another case of the same kind. A little girl, Katie R., who knew she was dying of consumption, came with her mother from the town of Fermoy in order to make a general confession to me in preparation for death. On their way to the Monastery they were joined at Lismore by a relative of their own, a Miss B., who was one of those employed to prevent penitents from coming to confession to me and make them go to the priest on the gallery. The little girl refused point blank to go to any confessor but me, and cried bitterly in the church when the other girl attempted to force her to do so. She went to confession to me. Then the story spread in some places was that I had beaten and compelled her to come to confession to myself while in other places it was that I had beaten and abused her because she went to another confessor. The poor little girl having heard of this on her sick bed—she died a few weeks after—in order to vindicate me made her mother bring her back again to Mount Melleray, and there she gave the Abbot a letter, written with her own hand, telling the whole truth as I have related it. She would not send the letter by post, lest it might fall into other hands than the Abbot's. This was one of the letters sent to the Sacred Congregation through the General Chapter in 1904, but suppressed there like all the rest; and then both versions of the false statements were used against me in Rome until the thing was detected in 1907.

III

THE false stories were not only artfully concocted, but skilfully put together in order to make them appear to corroborate and confirm one another; for they had all the same source and were directed now to the same end, that is, to secure my conviction in Rome. For example, they had originally started the story that I was beating and abusing the penitents in the church and the rest of what we have seen, in order to prove that I had lost my mind and was insane and consequently that I must be removed from the confessional.

Here, then, was another class of false stories to corroborate my insanity, and to make it appear that it could not be otherwise. Both of the stories I now give were invented, in the first instance by one of the monks and his niece who was then stopping on a visit with him at the Monastery. One of them was that I had given a woman

leave to go twice on the same day to Holy Communion, and that I had commanded her to do so; the other, that I had given another woman leave and had commanded her to go to Holy Communion after breakfasting. At the ladies' lodging house particularly, the visitors were all assured of the absolute truth of these stories; and, then, they were carried to the gentlemen's guest house and into the Monastery. Before the lying story was detected and exposed, hundreds from all parts who only knew me by name had left the Monastery, convinced that it must be true when a holy monk and priest was telling it, and that I must be insane or worse when I was doing such things as this. Of course, there was not a word nor a shadow of truth in either story. When detected, this priest and his niece had to acknowledge that these stories were pure inventions, at least as far as they related to me. Here is the Abbot's sworn evidence on this point, as presented to the Sacred Congregation in Rome; for, like all the other calumnies and slanders, after they were detected and put down at Mount Melleray, they, too, were sent to Rome and recorded there against me as proven facts:

"I, as Abbot, know that attempts were made, through the lodge and the ladies' lodging house, and through the college and gentlemen's guest house, as well as in the community to spread the report and have it circulated everywhere, that Father Isidore had given a person permission and had ordered that person to go to Communion twice on the same day, and that he had also given leave to another person and ordered her to go to Communion after knowing she had breakfasted. I know also that many efforts were likewise made to spread the report that Father Isidore had beaten and abused people in the church because they would not go to confession to himself. Having most minutely and carefully examined every one of these cases, I know that these charges were absolutely untrue, and utterly without any justification or the least foundation in the world, and could only have sprung from envy or jealousy, or from some other unworthy motive. Besides being proved to be false, the originators and propagators of these stories had to admit that they were so, and that they had no grounds whatever for them."

They most sedulously spread everywhere this report of my insanity, because to those in Ireland or elsewhere who never knew me, it supplied an apparent motive of credibility for all their other calumnies and slanders. But this was not all; there was a deeper design. To strike me down in Rome was now their main aim and object, seeing that they had so often failed to do it at Mount Melleray; and for several reasons this charge or allegation of insanity was one that, in my circumstances and with the machinery they had at work

in Rome, could never, as they imagined, be refuted by me there, whatever I might do at Mount Melleray.

In the first place I myself never knew, nor did I even suspect, that they were making this charge of insanity against me in Rome, until I was already branded there as insane. Therefore, I could not have refuted it. In the second place, even if I had known that they were making it, I could not refute it, for I could not pack up my mind and send it there by post to show that it was still quite sound and sane, nor could I go there myself; while, as we have seen and shall see more clearly still in what follows, all the evidence I sent there was intercepted. But what was worst of all and what made it, not only for the present but for ever, impossible for me to defend myself in this matter or indeed in anything else, was the fact that, once condemned or branded as insane, it followed in Rome that I was incapable of pleading my own cause; so that my whole case fell into the hands of my opponents there. And they, instead of allowing myself or anyone else for me to prove my innocence and my sanity of mind, constituted themselves my representatives, as the Law empowered them to do; and, then, they pleaded my insanity as an explanation for my having committed all the other things with which, as seen, I was so falsely charged. How this part of the false game was played in Rome, and how in the end we detected them at it, will be one of the great revelations of the second and third parts of our narrative.

IV

At the period, therefore, which we have now reached it was extraordinary the efforts they made to spread these false reports of my insanity. They turned, in fact, all their charges and false allegations into this channel, as if they were all converging and convincing proofs of it.

At the lodge and at the gentlemen's guest house two monks, one a priest, and the other a lay brother, not only spread this false report of my insanity among the Visitors and the community, but also corroborated and confirmed it by many other stories that were equally false and groundless. Here is one of them. They spread the report that my brain had been injured when I was a secular priest by being thrown down a flight of stairs by a Protestant doctor and by falling on my head on that occasion; the brother at the lodge giving several extraordinary incidents with most minute and circumstantial details, all his own invention, in order to prove that, in consequence of this, I had to be suspended from priestly duties for insanity before I came to Mount Melleray. The principal witness to

prove this against him was his own assistant at the lodge, where he had heard him tell these things to many. Of course, all this was proved to be absolutely false, and the letters of Cardinal Logue and Monsignor Byrne, which will be given later on, prove also its falsehood and malice. But here is one of the retractions on the subject, made by the priest who spread it from the gentlemen's guest house; and it, of itself, is all sufficient for the present. I say one of his retractions, for this priest had to make several of them; because, unfortunately, their retractions and apologies only meant too often that they tried to make their calumnies more secure from detection in the future.

The following is the retraction:—"I, Father D., acknowledge that it is not true that Father Isidore was at any time insane before he came to Mount Melleray, or that he was at any time thrown down from the top of a flight of stairs by a Protestant doctor or by anyone else, on the occasion of an enquiry or on any other occasion. Nor had I any authority or right to say that I was told so by a priest of the diocese of Armagh; nor was I ever told so by any other priest or layman. I acknowledge that the whole thing was an invention; and I hereby retract it all, and express my deep and sincere regret for having said it.

"I shall do my best to have the calumny retracted wherever it may have been spread from me; and I will impose on Father P. the obligation of retracting the same in the case of the persons to whom he has told it, or caused it to be told, for I acknowledge that it was I that told it to him.

"Made in the presence of the Abbot of Mount Melleray and signed by Father D."

But this had gone to Rome as an undoubted fact, and was never retracted there until we discovered what they were doing, and compelled them to retract it five years after.

Another of the cognate calumnies that this father had to acknowledge and retract was that I was getting bottles of brandy and whisky into the Monastery through a gentleman coming to the guest house every Sunday to confession to me, and that I was drinking them in my room inside, and lying drunk there. It was not myself, but the gentleman—a pioneer of temperance—who was alleged to have brought the bottles of brandy to me, who made him retract this statement, so that it was only afterwards that I learned of it. This same calumny, that is, that I was getting in bottles of brandy and whisky through the confessional in the public church, was found to have been circulated through the lodge and ladies' lodging house, but the originators and propagators of it there could not be detected. It was to corroborate these calumnies that the

secular priest above referred to, and other outside accomplices of the party, were circulating that I was a drunken, suspended priest before I came to Mount Melleray. So that, once more, we see one calumny and slander corroborating and confirming another. And though they seemed to be coming from totally different sources, when traced it was invariably discovered that their first source and origin was always in the Monastery itself. Of course, the absurdity, as well as the falsehood and malice, of these stories of the brandy and whisky bottles and of the drunkenness, were proved by innumerable witnesses. Everyone, in fact, at Mount Melleray knew that I was a strict total abstainer—nothing was better known. Besides, the stories of bottles of brandy and whisky were, in my case at least, an absolute impossibility at the Monastery. But still, like all the rest, it passed well enough in Rome until I discovered it. It also worked very well far away where nobody knew me, or anything about me. Along with an immense accumulation of utterly false and damaging stories about me, it was spread through the agency of the Gaelic League among those who had heard of me in London. The originator of the story there was a messenger direct from Mount Melleray, and a trusted associate and agent of the leader of the faction in the Monastery.

We must now pass on to some of the other ways and means they were employing to get it thoroughly spread and propagated far and wide, that I had lost my mind and was now insane. There was one place especially where they thought they could do this easily and safely, as well as openly and effectively, namely, at the college, where, in fact, all this was concocted. They were quite sure that they had all the monks teaching there and the students, too, fully secured against me, though in both cases they were greatly mistaken. More than twenty of the students made declarations that this was going on for years at the college, and almost every student was prepared to do the same. Four or five of these declarations were forwarded to Rome in 1907. Though some of the other declarations were much fuller and more detailed than the one I give, yet I must here limit myself to it; for, at the present moment, I have not got any of the others at hand. Here, then, is the declaration I give:

“My Lord Abbot,—I have been a student of the seminary at Mount Melleray for a number of years. I heard it circulated in the seminary or college that Father Isidore had lost his mind and was insane. This report, to my knowledge, was spread and propagated from the college among the visitors, especially when Father Isidore was not hearing confessions in the church. We always knew that the report was false, and that it must be malicious in its origin. The

report came to the college from the monks at the Monastery, but I cannot say for certain who the particular persons were that were originating and getting these reports spread.

“(Signed) M. H.”

Brother B. of the Monastery has sworn that Mrs C. and others from Dungarvan asked him if Father Isidore's mind was getting any better. And when he expressed his astonishment at such a question, saying that there never was anything wrong with Father Isidore's mind, they told him that the students from the college had circulated around Dungarvan that Father Isidore's mind had given way, and that he was insane; and that the monks at the college had told them to let everybody know it, in order to keep the people from coming to Mount Melleray to see him when he was in such a state. Similar evidence, proving this to have been done at the college, was produced from every county of the South of Ireland, the students being particularly warned to let the people of their neighbourhood know that they need not come to Mount Melleray to see me because I had now lost my mind. A student who was nephew of one of the monks, and cousin of another, warned his fellow-students at the college to do this; and he did it himself not only in his own neighbourhood, but, for months before he left the college, he watched almost all the visitors coming to the Monastery and told them the same story. In the parish of Mooncoin, County Kilkenny, Mr C., a student of Mount Melleray, told it to the people there, giving as his authority the name of the priest who accused me of the same thing at my profession, and who was now the leader of the local political faction.

Because the fact of this being wide-spread and notorious would be the very best proof of it for them in Rome, they sent it out through every possible channel from the Monastery, and spread it in every direction and in every conceivable way; while I then knowing nothing about it, and, moreover, being a stranger in the place, without friend or relative near me and without permission to speak to anyone, their false reports met with little or no obstacle. More than fifty witnesses testified to this; some of them testifying that they themselves had been unwittingly made instrumental in propagating and spreading abroad this report of my insanity, not knowing then its falsehood, and the malicious object underlying it. Others testified that they heard it in their localities and believed it; because it was always told on the authority of the monks and priests at the college and of the confessors in the church. Here is one of these letters from County Kerry, and there were dozens of similar letters from every part of the country. This letter proves both things.

"I, Mrs O'S. of Cahirciveen, County Kerry, hereby declare that it was reported among all the visitors at Mount Melleray when I was there that Father Isidore was insane. Father Isidore was not then hearing confession in the public church at the Monastery, and I was told at the lodge and the ladies' lodging house that he had lost his mind and had had to be sent away. I was told the same in the church.

"I heard this report also in County Kerry; and one of those who told it to me there said that she, too, heard it from the monks of Melleray and that, like myself, she had heard it both at the lodge and in the church. I now know that these reports were altogether without foundation, and that they were wicked falsehoods, but I cannot say who were the originators of them at Mount Melleray."

We have already seen that it was the monks at the college that originated the false stories about my insanity. And now several witnesses testified—and their evidence was forwarded to Rome—that it was one of the confessors that told it to them in the public church. Several witnesses also proved to the report of my insanity having been circulated wholesale through the Southern and South-Eastern counties of Ireland, and, though less generally, even northwards to Newry and Belfast as well as to Galway in the West; and that it was circulated specially through the agency of some of the convents and by priests. Who then could doubt it when it had priests and nuns and the holy monks of Mount Melleray as its authors?

In the cities of Cork and Waterford particularly, where my adversaries had many relatives and partisans, those even who met me every week in the confessional, and knew the falsity and malice of the report, dare not open their lips to contradict it. They were invariably met with the retort "that it was ridiculous to attempt to deny it; for that everybody, especially priests and nuns, would not repeat it if it were not true."

By order of the Abbot I afterwards went myself in 1907 to one of these priests who had sedulously propagated it in Cork. At first he tried to deny having reported it, pretending to laugh at my having imagined any such thing; but when I confronted him with the proof that he had done so, he had to admit it, saying that he had only confounded me with another priest who had become insane at Mount Melleray. This excuse was, of course, ridiculous, for that priest had left Mount Melleray many years before I went to it, and was long since dead; and this priest in Cork was warning the people—for instance, John Foley of Douglas Road, Cork—that they need not go to Mount Melleray to confession to me, for that I was now insane and in the asylum. In other cases I was met even by nuns

with the contemptuous reply that people like me, who were mad never knew it. I had, therefore, to give up contradicting this false story, or getting it contradicted, for this only made them spread it the more.

Then, as things went on, every one of the calumnies and false stories were, as I have said, turned into this channel, as if they all proved my insanity. And again when or wherever these stories were detected and proved to be false and malicious, the new story was, that nobody had ever said any of these things about me, but that I, being insane, had imagined them. However, they had sent them all to Rome; and when we discovered them there in 1907, as will be seen, it could no longer be mere insane imagination on my part, but real malice on theirs.

But here was the crowning proof of my madness; and with it we will conclude the subject. There was a mixed crowd of people, men and women, boys and girls, on a Sunday in July or August at Mount Melleray. Two girls climbed over the wall into the Monastic enclosure. One of them was got out by way of the gentlemen's recreation grounds, but the other got in through the Monastery, and the news of this spread everywhere. Now the monks who used to meet these girls denied all this, adding that it was only that I being insane had imagined it; and this, too, was spread abroad, and then packed off to Rome, to prove that I had totally and irrecoverably lost my mind. But, again, there were two little weaknesses in the proof; I had never spoken of it at all, and nobody could ever be produced who had heard a word about it from me; and, again, there were innumerable witnesses who saw it, and who proved to the fact that it did occur. Many of these witnesses can still be produced, and nobody now denies it.

V

Now all this we have been describing, particularly in the last three chapters, was fully and overwhelmingly proved at the various inquisitions at Mount Melleray, and had to be admitted by the Inquisitors there; while the proofs of it, as we have seen them, were duly and officially forwarded to the authorities in Rome. But these proofs were being intercepted in Rome by officials of the Abbot-General's Office and of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; while, on the contrary, all the refuted evidence and the absurd and exploded stories we have been describing were being piled up by them in Rome as genuine and incontroverted evidence against me. It is themselves in Rome we will compel to prove all

this and to prove a great deal more in the second and third parts of our narrative. This, indeed, is the real meaning of what we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter, and of the boast of the man who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, about what he could get done against me there when the opportune time came.

There were, however, two great obstacles still why these Roman officials could not as yet use any of this evidence to effect my condemnation. One was that their condemnation would have to come through the Abbot of Mount Melleray, and then he could expose their plots both at Mount Melleray and in Rome; the other was that the Abbot-General in Rome, Dom Sebastian, as we see from Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901, knew the whole case; and he would by no means permit any wrong to be done in Rome without resisting it to the utmost of his power.

We shall soon, however, see the sudden rush my opponents made to effect their purpose in Rome, when they thought they had both those obstacles out of their way, and how they were mistaken and quickly caught and convicted. But we must proceed a little further yet before we come to these things that were done in Rome.

CHAPTER IX

I

As stated above, the Visitation and Enquiry of 1903, like the previous ones in 1898 and 1900, completely exculpated me from every one of the groundless charges my accusers had brought against me, thereby fully justifying all my actions and conduct as a priest and confessor. Abbot Eugene had, therefore, once more to declare so to the whole community, and to declare also that it was my unscrupulous and vindictive accusers who were themselves the guilty culprits in the whole business, as we have already so clearly seen and proved them to be.

Though, in order to screen their convicted accomplices at Mount Melleray, the officials of the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation in Rome strictly forbade Abbot Eugene to supply me with any report or with any proof of my vindication and justification at this Visitation and Enquiry, in 1903, as his letter, which I still retain, proves, yet they unwittingly supply ample evidence of it themselves.

Father Symphorian in his letter to myself of July 13, 1904, and in his letter to the Abbot of Mount Melleray of January 17, 1905—

both of them written by him from Rome as representing the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation, and both of which will be given later on—testifies that Abbot Eugene as Immediate Superior and Special Visitor and Inquisitor, always—in 1903 as well as in 1900—and in all things, after full investigation of their charges and allegations, completely exculpated and justified me in all my actions. And Father Symphorian tells us also in both these letters that in May, 1904, he had himself to produce that proof of my full and complete justification to the Assessor of the Holy Office, before whose tribunal the men at Mount Melleray had again secretly brought all their previously refuted charges; and that, on that supreme proof of my complete justification, the Assessor had to acquit me and declare me innocent of every charge and allegation they made against me. No vindication of my conduct could, therefore, be clearer and fuller in every respect and in every detail.

In addition to this, the Visitation and Enquiry of 1903 once more established so fully and clearly the fact that all the scandals and troubles at the Monastery originated from the unbridled intercourse between the women and girls and the members of the party opposed to me, particularly those at the college, that the Regular Visitor again commanded and strictly enjoined on the Abbot himself the binding obligation of putting a stop to all this, by allowing none of them, without exception, to hold any intercourse whatever with anyone from the outside, except by special and express permission from the Abbot himself. He also ordered that the two or three others who were doing so much harm and causing so much trouble at the lodge and shop and in the church, should be removed as soon as convenient from the positions they held in these places, for these could not otherwise be prevented from intercourse with all kinds of seculars. The proof of this is contained in the Regular Visitor's report-book at Mount Melleray, and in the sworn extracts from it that were forwarded to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars at the trials in Rome in 1907. In the light of what we shall see done against me by the Roman Officials a few months hence this is all of supreme importance; for it makes it utterly impossible that there could then be any evidence of any kind whatever against me in Rome.

II

BUT immediately after the Visitation, and before he could effect any of these reforms, the Abbot of Mount Melleray had to start to make his inspection of the Monasteries of the Order in Ireland and England, and he was thence to proceed directly to the General

Chapter in France. He learned, however, before starting, that the attacks on me in the church and at the confessional were in his absence to be renewed by the party with a hundredfold bitterness, in revenge for the signal defeat and exposure that had been inflicted on them at the enquiry just concluded, and that all the engines of war the party could command were to be brought into action the moment he left the Monastery.

He knew, in fact, that two of the women, who with several others were to be used against me, were already at Cappoquin, less than three miles away, secretly awaiting his departure in order to come up to the Monastery and commence operations. One of these was a person from County Waterford who, on three previous occasions, had spent at the Monastery eight or nine weeks each time at the same work, so that she knew perfectly the whole ropes of the game. The other was a girl from Cork.

The Abbot delayed his departure for a week, thinking this would upset their plans, and before leaving he warned me of this, and of the troubles I might expect in the church and at the confessional, as well as at the Monastery generally; giving me at the same time permission to speak, in his absence, to any member of the community to whom it might be necessary to do so in order to protect myself. I was also warned about what was going on by three or four members of the community, and, through them, by some of the visitors from the outside; so that I was able to watch and know the whole plot from the beginning and to prove what was going on not by one or two, but by several independent witnesses.

Not only the two women above mentioned but numbers of others of the same class began to flock to the Monastery as soon as the Abbot had left. This was usual in his absence, but never before to such an extent. Of course, there were many decent and respectable persons there also; and it was through these that I was kept well informed, as they told what was going on to their friends in the community, that they might let me know the perils and dangers of the situation and warn me to beware of them.

At the ladies' lodging house the two women above mentioned with a few others, some of whose names were never revealed, held every night a reunion of their accomplices, or those supposed to be so, planning their attacks on me for the next day and trying to win all they could to join them. It was the same every day at the lodge, while the brother who was there was encouraging and protecting them from detection. In the shop where one of the fathers was in charge they were at the same work, freely discussing with this father the practical plans they were to employ and the means they

were to adopt to get me removed from the Monastery or at least from the confessional. The two leading women from Cork and County Waterford were telling the others that I would certainly be removed from the confessional. The father at the shop was urging and encouraging them to do this, and even helping them to formulate the false reports and charges they were to make and instructing them how to write the letters that were to be sent to my superiors, and especially to the Bishop of Waterford.

Both of these women from Cork and Waterford boasted at the same time that they were on terms of the greatest intimacy with some of the Bishop's friends who knew him well, and that they had it on the best authority that, if he could only find a plausible excuse and a favourable opportunity, he would do his part in the business against me, to please the friends of my opponents in Cork and in the diocese of Waterford—in fact, that he dare do nothing else; stating also that their business now was to procure for him, and to supply him with, evidence that would justify him in doing so. But there were persons also present in the shop at these proceedings who were watching in my interest all that was going on, with the intention of letting me know it—as they afterwards did, in order that I might provide against the danger.

Everything possible was now done to disturb the church, and to annoy and provoke myself and the penitents coming to confession to me; so that, in this respect, it was far worse than anything we have yet seen. But I kept as much as possible away from the church, and particularly from the confessional, lest any of those who were plotting in this way with the father in the shop might come to confession to me; for I was already warned that they intended to send some of them to tell me in confession all that was happening, so as to close my mouth, as they said, thinking that, once I had heard it from anybody's confession, I could never speak of anything I might otherwise hear or know about it. In fact, after I learned what was going on in the shop I made up my mind to hear none of these women's confessions; because I had resolved to charge them and the father in the shop with what was going on there, and to bring the matter at once to a crisis. This was the only way by which I could now protect myself from such a party, and such a treacherous and unscrupulous plot.

Having, therefore, learned all that was going on in the shop on the testimony of witnesses whom I could trust, and whom I knew I could produce, I went to the Father then in charge at Mount Melleray—for we have seen that the Abbot was away—and told him I had full knowledge of what was going on at the shop, and of the part the

father there was taking in it. I said nothing about what had been occurring at the lodge and the ladies' lodging house, fearing lest anyone who had been present there might have been at confession with me. But I knew that none of those present at the shop when the incidents which I was relating to this father took place there could possibly have been at confession with me after these occurrences; for I knew them all, and, as I have said, I avoided hearing any of their confessions.

I informed this father to whom I made the complaint and who, I knew, was the real instigator of all the attacks on me, that I had the proof in writing of what I told him, and some at least of the witnesses of it in the Monastery. This father then went out to the lodge and told the story there, as afterwards transpired, in a way which implied that I had the knowledge from the confessions I heard. This he did by insiduously concealing the fact that I had the witnesses in the house and the evidence in writing which would have shown that it was not possible that it could be knowledge obtained from the confessional outside; and, also, by falsely suggesting that I had told him what had occurred at the lodge and ladies' lodging house, as well as at the shop, thinking that this would show that my knowledge could only have come from the confessions I heard in the church. For it would seem impossible for anyone at the Monastery to know what was going on at the lodge or the ladies' lodging house and, therefore, it would appear that the knowledge I had could only have come to me through the confessional.

III

THIS brings us now to a new phase of the case, namely, to the Bishop's enquiry in 1904, to which, however, what we have seen at Mount Melleray since the Abbot's departure has been leading up, and was manifestly intended to lead up. For the episode of the women and girls from Cork and Waterford, and the reports and letters which they and the brother at the lodge and the father at the shop were endeavouring to get forwarded against me to the Bishop of the Diocese may be looked on as the connecting link between all that has gone before and the Bishop's enquiry which follows. It was these letters that seemed to justify the Bishop in now holding the enquiry into my conduct, even after Abbot Eugene had found me so innocent and my false accusers so guilty only a few weeks before.

As already seen from Abbot Eugene's report of June 10, 1901, it was on the Bishop of Waterford that my opponents in Rome and at Mount Melleray relied to whip the Abbot of Mount Melleray into

driving me in shame and disgrace from the confessional. But, besides what we have seen in that letter, my opponents at the Monastery, and the women and girls from the County of Cork and the diocese of Waterford, who were co-operating with them, and carrying on the attacks on me for them, were openly and confidently boasting for a long time that the Bishop would whip the Abbot to do this, in fact, that the Bishop was so much under the influence of my leading opponents at Mount Melleray and their many and influential friends and supporters in Cork and Waterford, that he dare not refuse to do it for them. Their boastings in this respect were fully confirmed at the Monastery by the fact that the Bishop, himself and all his friends, as well as the priests of his diocese, when they visited Mount Melleray were always closeted with my principal opponent and entertained by him. So that every one at Mount Melleray regarded the Bishop as one of the party opposed to me quite as much as any of my other adversaries. Indeed, my more unguarded opponents already boasted of my condemnation by the Bishop as a foregone conclusion, as a thing that was settled and arranged for them by their Cork and Waterford supporters outside.

Nor was it at the Monastery only that they were now convinced that the Bishop would most assuredly condemn me for them. My opponents at the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation in Rome were even far more certain of it. It is now fully proved from Rome, and even admitted by the Bishop himself, that he had already carried to Rome for the men at Mount Melleray their false stories against me, backing them up there with all the weight of his episcopal authority and influence. And in consequence of this the men opposed to me in Rome secretly forged, as we shall find proved by the Bishop himself, a false report of the enquiry he was now about to hold, and condemned me on the strength of that false and forged report. Nor did the Bishop contradict this report which the men in Rome forged in his name, nor withdrew the calumnies and slanders he had carried to Rome for them, until I discovered it, and compelled him to do both, nearly seven months after this sworn enquiry had completely vindicated me, and established my undoubted and indubitable innocence, and the guilt and criminality of my accusers and calumniators.

But there is another incident in connexion with this enquiry by the Bishop, which shows how artfully it was planned to secure my conviction. The Bishop was to hold the enquiry in a double capacity; one capacity was as Bishop of the diocese, the other as being delegated by Rome. If he could, by any means, find me guilty of anything, he was then to report it to the men in Rome, as their

delegate. But if I were found innocent and my accusers guilty, he was then to represent that he was only holding the enquiry as *Bishop of the diocese*, and make no report at all to Rome. And then the men in Rome, on the strength of his having originally carried the calumnies and slanders there against me, were to condemn me as having been found guilty at this enquiry. This latter was actually what was done. But we discovered it through a secret agent or detective in Rome. And having driven them, in the end, into a close corner we compelled the Bishop, the Secretary of the Abbot-General, and the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation to prove every tittle of it for us there. Thus, in any case, they had it arranged that I was to be represented as found guilty. This, then, will let us understand more clearly some of the things we shall see done at the Bishop's enquiry; and the letters and documents from Rome proving all this will be given in what follows.

IV

THE Bishop then, in January, 1904, thought he might get some sort of evidence for them in Rome to support the charges and allegations against me that he had already carried there, and for this purpose he instituted at Mount Melleray a formal investigation, or canonical Inquisition as he called it himself, in order to find if he could possibly discover any evidence in support of them, or any evidence against me of any kind whatever.

Though I then knew nothing concerning what was in Abbot Eugene's letter about the men in Rome getting the Bishop to "whip" the Abbot to punish me, nor about what the Bishop had done for them in Rome; yet, as I am now aware, the Abbot of Mount, Melleray knew it all, first from Abbot Eugene's letter as we have seen, and moreover from secret information which he had from Rome about the whole business.

He protested, therefore, in Rome against the Bishop of Waterford being appointed by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars to hold this enquiry, as it was a matter of public knowledge that, for local and personal reasons, he was an altogether prejudiced partisan; the Abbot demanding instead that some of the other Irish Bishops who were independent should be appointed. Of course, the Abbot's protest went unheeded at the office of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, as the whole enquiry was only a mere pretext and sham invented to enable them to condemn me with some appearance of legality, for, as stated, they actually forged in Rome a false report of the Bishop's enquiry, and pretended to condemn me on the strength of it.

I have said that I then knew nothing about what went on in Rome. But, on account of the knowledge I now had of the Bishop's relations with the Cork and Waterford people who were opposing me, and with my opponents at Mount Melleray, I endeavoured to have the Abbot or some one in authority in the Cistercian Order, present with the Bishop at the enquiry. The Bishop, however, would not hear of this, but held it with closed doors and all alone, none being present with him but the witness then under examination. I insisted also that all the evidence at the enquiry must be on oath and taken in writing by the Bishop, so that there would be a record of it; and, moreover, that I should know what the charges against me and the proofs of them were, before having to produce my rebutting evidence. I refused otherwise to attend, or submit to the enquiry; and on these two points the Bishop had to yield.

All those who had brought any accusations against me and every one else who could pretend to give any evidence against me were now examined; for I insisted on this also in order that there might be no loophole for escape. But when they were on oath not one of them could prove anything, or produce any evidence or any witness against me. I further insisted that every one of their charges and allegations should now be fully examined, so that they might be rebutted and disproved on oath by positive evidence. The Bishop had to consent to this also. The sworn evidence then given was in substance the same as that given at Abbot Eugene's enquiry four months before. It is, therefore, not necessary to repeat it here. Besides, the result clearing me of every charge and allegation brought against me tells us sufficiently what it was. It completely exonerated me of every charge and allegation they could pretend to bring against me.

There were two points, however, regarding which some new evidence was given. One was with regard to what had occurred at the shop the September previous, immediately after Abbot Eugene had left the Monastery and the Abbot of Mount Melleray had gone away. But this will come up later on. The other had reference to the charge made against me; "of showing a preference for hearing the confessions of women, while refusing to hear the confessions of the men and the poor and working people."

This charge rested on the one solitary fact that, notwithstanding all the coercion which, as seen, was used to make them go to the two confessors who brought the accusations against me, ninety per cent of the women who made retreats at Mount Melleray refused to do so, insisted on choosing their own confessors, and nearly all came to confession to me. My accusers, while having on oath to admit that they had no proof whatever of the charge, and not a single fact and

not a single witness to sustain it, still persisted that the great number of women's confessions I heard proved the case against me. In consequence of their having maintained this so stoutly and for so long a time, by order of the Bishop himself a constant watch was put on my confessional and the number of men and women whose confessions I heard, during the three months immediately preceding the enquiry, was carefully watched, counted, and sworn to. Here, then, was the result as proved on oath. I heard during that time 1,246 men in the church, all poor people of the working class; the gentlemen guests being heard inside in the Monastery. And inside I heard about 200 men's confessions—but these were not so accurately counted—making in all, 1,446 men heard by me in the three months. The number of women of all classes heard by me, as counted and sworn to, was 989—nearly twice as many men as women. It was also sworn, and uncontradicted, that I heard more than three times as many men as all the other five confessors at the Monastery taken together, and that these men were, for the most part, poor people of the working class. Innumerable cases at the same time, like those of the three women accused of carrying stories to me in the confessional and of the nun as given above, where I sent, or tried to send, the women to other confessors were also proved on oath; while not a single case of my ever refusing to hear any man's or any poor person's confession could be produced; for I had never done so. On the other hand, it was proved that the two confessors, who brought the charge against me, constantly refused to hear, or avoided hearing, the poor people's confessions, and that I had frequently to remain for hours in the church hearing these confessions that they would not hear. As the evidence at this enquiry was the same—with the addition of these corroborative proofs and figures that could not be denied as at Abbot Eugene's enquiry four months before—so the result was the same, a complete vindication of me in all my acts and conduct as a confessor. Regarding this enquiry here are the words of the Sacred Congregation, which, after a long and painful struggle, I compelled them to produce:—"His Lordship, the Bishop of Waterford, declares that, having held a formal enquiry and having taken thereat fuller information, it has resulted to him that all the accusations made against Father Isidore Mooney are false or unproven." While the Bishop wrote to myself declaring that he found me "innocent of all the charges they brought against me, and that he could do nothing else after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so." Surely nobody could ask for a more complete vindication than this.

V

Now, at this Inquisition I not only proved the falsehood and the unspeakable malice of the charges and allegations made against me, as the Bishop had to admit, but I fully exposed all that had gone on at the shop, the lodge and the college, and the whole detestable system of spreading calumnies and slanders against me that they might be carried to the Bishop himself, and to other superiors through the women and girls, who were frequenting these places and spending hours with the monks there. But to expose more fully and directly what was going on in this way, I singled out specially what had occurred only a few months before, in August and September, 1903, after the Regular Visitor had left the Monastery and the Abbot had gone away, detailing it just as I have done above when speaking of that period. I proved by sworn testimony and beyond the possibility of doubt or contradiction, that the Father at the shop was co-operating with, and encouraging and helping, the two women from Cork and Co. Waterford and the others acting with them, to concoct and make against me what they all knew to be groundless and malicious charges and accusations, and to send them against me to my superiors, and especially to the Bishop himself, as well as to spread them broadcast among the people in order to make them appear public and notorious. Then I proved that all this was encouraged and screened by the father in charge of the Monastery in the Abbot's absence; in fact, that these women and girls were kept by him at the Monastery for this very work, while he had the father in the shop helping to formulate the accusations and charges they were to make against me, and the calumnies and slanders they were to spread. They dared not attempt to deny that it was all true, for they knew that I had abundant written and other evidence to prove it.

But how I got this information and the evidence was the mystery, and I had as yet, in no wise, helped them to solve it. They, however, set about solving it themselves by making an accusation against me which, if proved true, would ruin my character for ever as no priest's character was ever ruined before. It was the father who had been in charge at the Monastery in the Abbot's absence, and who had been my relentless opponent from the beginning, that brought the accusation, and it was one he pretended to have kept to himself for four months and now produced at a moment's notice; for the whole original enquiry had actually closed before this accusation was brought against me. It was, in fact, merely an afterthought when they were defeated.

The accusation was that I had directly and deliberately violated the seal of Sacramental confession in revealing, to this father himself, what Mrs O. had told me under the seal of confession; alleging that it was from her confession that I knew all that had gone on in the shop, and that I could not possibly have any knowledge whatever of it from any other source. He now, on oath, made this a formal accusation against me, taking on himself the responsibility of proving it, and without a moment's further notice the Bishop put me on my trial for it. My accuser then swore that, before leaving the Monastery, in September, 1903, Mrs O. had accused me to himself of directly violating the seal of her confession by revealing to him what she had told me under that seal; and he swore also that she had written to himself afterwards repeating this accusation. This was the charge made by him, and the sworn evidence he gave in support of it as the Bishop read it to me.

The Bishop, likewise, asserted that this letter of Mrs O., accusing me of directly and deliberately violating the seal of her confession by revealing the secrets of it to this Father, was forthcoming in evidence against me. He did not, however, produce any letter. Then the father who brought the charge produced the father from the shop as a second witness to prove the case against me. This father swore that Mrs O. had confessed to me what the two women from Cork and Waterford and what the others were doing and saying against me, when they were with himself in the shop. He swore also—and this was the most important of all—that it was absolutely impossible that I could have heard these things from anyone else, or from any other source whatever except from Mrs O. in confession; swearing in proof of this that none of those who were in the shop when these things occurred had ever spoken to anyone, or could have spoken to me or to anyone else, at the Monastery about the occurrences in the shop, before I mentioned them to the father who made the charge of violating the seal of confession against me; for that he himself had prevented them from seeing anyone.

This certainly seemed overwhelming evidence against me. So overwhelming, indeed, was the evidence, or so overwhelming at least did the Bishop pretend it to be, that, when I asked for two days to prepare my defence, he declared that, the offence being so serious and the evidence so strong and convincing, he could not give me one moment, but that he would instantly suspend me from hearing confessions unless I produced the evidence of my innocence before he left the Monastery; and that he was going to leave it in a few minutes.

This was just what I wanted in order that the case might stand

out in the boldest relief possible. I then produced Father T., who swore that he told it all to me before I had ever mentioned the matter to anyone, and that two of the girls who had been in the shop all the time, Maggie W. and Miss D., both of Queenstown, Co. Cork, told it to him. He swore also that both the father in the shop and the father who brought the charge against me knew this all the time; for that the father in the shop saw them with him, or at least heard that they were with him both from Father T. himself and from the girls, and that it was the father now bringing the charge against me who gave the permission for his seeing these girls. This evidence crushed them to the very earth, for they thought this father would not dare to give evidence against me. But, worse still! Mrs O. was not at confession, as will be seen; and the whole story about her was an infamous concoction, and her pretended letter, if it ever existed, a forgery.

VI

THEN, there were two things connected with this shocking accusation which show to what extremes they went, and how much they tried to prevent me from ever being able to clear my character of this terrible charge. Father T., they knew, could clear my character; they knew that Mrs O. could do it also. Either the one or the other could do it, and they knew that nobody else in this world could.

Let us see what they did in these two cases. Father T. was at the time a sub-deacon, not yet a deacon or priest, and he was a professor at the college. He was one of the most popular of the community in the Monastery and at the college, but the party never imagined that he would dare to give evidence for me. He had got an almost unanimous vote for sub-deaconship just before the Bishop's enquiry; but immediately after he was blackballed for his deaconship by the votes of the party, one of the fathers whose evidence he had contradicted boasting that he had got that from them because he had given evidence for me at the Bishop's enquiry, and that anyone who would take my part would get the same. So manifest and flagrant was the vendetta against him because he swore the truth—for they openly proclaimed it—that the Superior of the Order commanded that he should be ordained contrary to this utterly unscrupulous and manifestly vindictive vote—a thing never done in any other case. And he commanded, moreover, that he should be raised to the priesthood without any vote whatever being taken. But the vendetta

grew infinitely worse, so that he had to leave the college as professor and had even to get a temporary dispensation and leave the Monastery. And this was done in the name and under the cloak of religion! No wonder, then, that after this others refused to give any evidence for me, because, they said, if they did they might as well leave the Monastery with this unscrupulous and vindictive party against them.

Of course, after the evidence of Father T., Mrs O.'s evidence was not necessary, and the Bishop would not then allow me to prosecute the matter further, as he said that it would be a great scandal to the faithful to know that any priest had ever accused another of such a horrible, unheard of crime as violation of the seal of confession. But let us see, now, the scheme they laid to prevent all possibility of this charge being proved false through Mrs O.'s evidence, and then examine what was her part in the whole matter; for this will be a revelation. In the visitors' book at the lodge Mrs O. was entered by the brother there as being from Cork. Whether it was the city or the county that was meant, there was no way of deciding; and I did not know her address beyond hearing her family name. We had the city of Cork searched from top to bottom, but no Mrs O. was to be found; the parishes of the county were ransacked but no Mrs O. was forthcoming. At last, years after, the address of her husband, who was at the Monastery with her on this occasion, was found in the visitors' book at the gentlemen's guest house, and instead of being Cork it was a small town in another remote county. There she was easily found.

Now, all this time, it looked as if Mrs O. had acted a most deceitful and unscrupulous part in falsely accusing me of revealing the secret of her confession, and in writing again to my accuser to renew this fearful accusation. But here comes the crowning fact of all. Mrs O. has now been found, and she testifies that she never in her life spoke to the father who brought the charge against me; that she never wrote a line to him; that she never in her life accused me to anyone in the world of such a thing as violating the seal of her confession; that she never dreamt of such a thing; and that such a thing could never have entered her imagination, for that, after what had occurred in the shop, it was to Father John she went to confession. The whole story of her having accused me of violating the seal of her confession was a fabrication; and, as I have already said, her pretended letter, if it ever existed, a forgery. She is still prepared to swear to all this, and neither the person who brought the charge nor the Bishop now attempt to deny it. This surely requires no comment; but I leave the reader himself to distribute the blame as he thinks it is deserved.

However, as a result of this part of his investigation, the Bishop had again to declare me completely innocent of this horrible charge, and declare also that the person making the charge, and the witness he had got to corroborate him, must have conspired to make the charge, and to sustain it by false evidence.

VII

THIS was truly an astounding case, and one that is absolutely without parallel in the history of the Church. At least in the reading of history I have never come across such a case, nor have I ever met anyone who has. Moreover, it is the universal belief of Roman Catholics, and often asserted by the most approved writers of the Church, that no priest has ever directly violated the seal of confession, as I was here accused of doing and as these two men deliberately swore I had done. This gives one an idea of what men will sometimes do in cases like this, when they think that they can safely do it in the dark. Yet like all the rest, this shocking case was simply withdrawn by the Bishop as if it had never been made, and as if there had never been a word of perjury in the case nor any forgery at all. He never even mentioned it to the Abbot; nor did he make any report of his sworn enquiry to Rome until, as we shall see, the Bishop himself having to confess, I compelled him to do so more than six months after my vindication. And then, as we shall see also, it was only a sham report of the case that he made to the men in Rome who, he knew, were screening and supporting all this villainy there; whereas he was bound to make it through his agent in Rome, the Rector of the Irish College, who would soon have compelled all this to be put right both in Rome and at Mount Melleray.

On account, however, of its unparalleled enormity this charge was one that I could not allow to pass unnoticed in this way. I, therefore, consulted the Abbot and two other fathers about what should be done. They all advised that in such a shocking case I should at once write to the Bishop, fully setting forth the charge and the proven falsehood and impossibility of the evidence that my accuser and his witness had given; that I should also insert in the letter the evidence that I had produced and the proofs I had given; and that I should demand from the Bishop a written declaration of my innocence. I did this, and the Abbot read the letter and then posted it, so that he could prove to its contents and to its being forwarded to the Bishop. This he proved on oath, on the occasion of the trials in Rome in 1907.



This letter was posted on January 9, three days after the enquiry. On the following day the Bishop wrote as follows:

“ BISHOP’S HOUSE,
JOHN’S HILL,
WATERFORD.

“ *January 10, 1904.*

“ My dear Father Isidore,

“ I beg to thank you for your letter received to-day and to say the charge to which you refer was not sustained.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ RICHARD A. SHEEHAN,

“ Bishop of Waterford, etc.”

Though this answer, taken by itself, would mean little or nothing, yet my advisers considered that, with my letter, and the witnesses and evidence I could produce, it was quite sufficient in the case, and that its more than meagreness, owing to the enormity of the case, would help to show the spirit that was at work to conceal the culprits and the gravity of their guilt. However, twelve months after, when the Bishop and the Secretary to the Abbot-General were driven into a very close corner, the Bishop, in a letter which will be given, had to write to myself acknowledging that this false and infamous charge really was made on this occasion by my accusers.

In what follows this extraordinary enquiry will play a very important part; for, as already stated, until detected the men in Rome secretly forged for themselves a false report; they pretended to find me guilty, and on the strength of this they proceeded to convict me of most horrible crimes. The Bishop, though knowing this, made no report of his enquiry until I compelled him to do so seven months after. How all this was done in Rome, and how it was detected there and brought to light, will be the chief subject of the second part of our narrative.

MONASTIC POLITICS AND ABUSE OF ROMAN PROCEDURE

PART II

CHAPTER I

I

THE scene now changes from Mount Melleray to Rome. Their baseless stories, their calumnies, and their slanders, their charges and groundless allegations had all fallen in Ireland on barren soil, and had produced nothing for them; or rather, they had only brought forth their own condemnation with hundreds of undeniable proofs of their guilt and culpability. Nevertheless, as we have seen from Abbot Eugene's letter and learned also from their own boasting, with the influence they had in Rome and with a judicious use there of the money the pretended doctor was bringing from Ireland and elsewhere, they were still confidently boasting that they could yet, when the proper time came, make them produce a rich harvest in Rome.

As we have also seen from Abbot Eugene's letter that rich harvest was to be my condemnation by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. And now the opportune time for reaping it had at last come. In the June following the Bishop's enquiry at Mount Melleray, the Abbot-General in Rome was in a dying state, absolutely prostrate in mind and body and incapable of understanding anything that was going on there. He died on August 17 following. The Abbot of Mount Melleray was at the same time supposed to be dying at the Monastery. He had received the last Sacraments of the Church, and it was not expected that he could possibly survive more than two days. The doctors having declared so, at Mount Melleray they were all now sure of it. On June 17, my principal opponent at Mount Melleray wrote to the General's Office in Rome informing them of this. That letter reached Rome on the 23rd. The Abbot of Mount Melleray who, contrary to all their expectations, soon recovered, has himself sworn to these facts in a declaration laid before the Sacred Congregation in Rome. In addition to this and putting the matter beyond all doubt, a letter will be produced giving clear proof that they knew in the General's Office in Rome that the Abbot at Mount Melleray was then supposed to be dying, for this is now an important factor in the case.

Here, then, was their opportunity. The way, at last, was clear for

them, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome. The men plotting against me in Rome could, secretly and safely, get me struck down there, for there was no Abbot-General to prevent them; and as the Abbot at Mount Melleray was supposed to be out of the way, it was one of my chief opponents who was to complete the work there and to clinch the nail.

The first thing necessary for all this was to get me condemned by some of the Roman Congregations; or rather, to make it appear that I was thus condemned.

Their skilled and active agent in Rome who was to manage all this for them was, as his own letters will show, Father Symphorian, Secretary to the late Abbot-General. He went first to the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, falsely representing himself there as Procurator-General of the Order, for he would not otherwise be permitted to plead or appear before the Holy Office in the case. He tried in that capacity to obtain my condemnation by the tribunal of the Holy Office, using the argument of "the perpetual denunciations against me," the same argument with which my opponent at Mount Melleray, who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, boasted, as we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter, that he could get me condemned there, even though all the denunciations and accusations against me were proved to be false and malicious. At the Holy Office, however, Father Symphorian failed completely in this.

But by falsely representing to the Assessor of that Tribunal that, on account of "these perpetual denunciations," the Abbot-General wanted me condemned for the sake of peace and could not do it himself, he got the Assessor to allow the case to go before the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. And, then, at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars he got certain officials who were, as we shall see, his confederates in the business, to give him a document which he himself afterwards, in translating it from Italian into French, changed and converted into a verdict of guilt and a sentence of condemnation against me by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

Having got thus far with my condemnation, in order to make assurance doubly sure, he now turned back in the business, and without a shadow of justification or authority invented himself another condemnation of me by the tribunal of the Holy Office; so that he had me now condemned, not by one but by two of the Tribunals in Rome; both the condemnations, however, being altogether the skilled and cunning work of his own hand and brain. But where now was the evidence on which he pretended that they

condemned me? Well, he forged or got forged a letter, which he pretended to be the Bishop's own report of his sworn enquiry purporting to find me guilty. And then he got the officials of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, who had been his confederates in the business from the beginning, to intercept the Bishop's true and genuine report of the sworn enquiry which proved that I was perfectly innocent of all and every accusation and allegation they brought against me. He got them also to intercept, and he himself intercepted at the General's Office, numbers of other proofs, and unimpeachable documents which overwhelmingly established my perfect innocence, and proved the guilt and malice of my false accusers; such, for example, as Abbot Eugene's report which has been given above. Then after intercepting them, he asserts that we never sent them at all; and until he was detected and convicted, he continued to assert that there never were any such documents sent to Rome.

His intrigues and inventions did not end here; there seemed indeed to be no end to them. In his capacity of secretary to the Abbot-General who was dying, he falsely affixed the Abbot-General's name and authority to these condemnations; and then wrote after the Abbot-General's death another letter, attributing all this that he had done himself to the Procurator-General and to the dead Abbot-General; changing all the facts and dates to make the story appear plausible, and to screen his own evil conduct and that of his confederates in the office of the Sacred Congregation. But in doing this, believing that the Abbot of Mount Melleray was out of the way and that, therefore, I could get no scrutiny or examination of these things, he was altogether off his guard and blundered so badly that, to save himself, he had to make the late Abbot-General sign my condemnation four days after his death, to represent me as having been condemned on the authority of the Bishop's written report of his sworn enquiry seven weeks before it was written at all; and his own letters gave the lie to one another in nearly every sentence; while in his dates, he made the months of July and August come before June 28 in the same year. As long as things went on in secret and in the dark in Rome, this, too, went on all right with him; because, until we employed a detective there, he had always a remedy for it. When we wrote exposing it to the Abbots of the General Chapter, to the Abbot-General, and to the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation, he always intercepted our letters himself or got them intercepted. And then, as he wrote himself, he could afford to laugh at our ignorance and our complaints, asserting at the same time that we had never written a word at all about these things.

To crown all this, and that I might never be able to clear my character or bring any of these things to light, he gave an order on his own authority, but in the name of the dying Abbot-General, who knew nothing at all about it, that I must instantly leave the Monastery without a moment's delay, and that, before leaving, I must make no attempt to expose these things, or to defend my character and prove my innocence; which, in fact, meant that I must never more attempt to do it. That would have for ever screened them all from detection.

He did all this himself without any right or authority in the world to do it. And when the Abbot-General was dead, until his own letters convicted him of it—for though Abbot-Generals die, *littera scripta manent*—he falsely maintained that it was the late Abbot-General who did; and that he himself had nothing in the world to do with it. Later on when they turned against one another, the Bishop of Waterford also bore testimony that convicted him of the most barefaced forgery; and the intercepted letter that proved this forgery to the hilt was brought to light by our detective and our lawyer in Rome.

Now, the reason why he had the hardihood to attempt all this was that his false letters pretending to be legitimate sentences of condemnation against me were to fall into the hands of one of my bitterest opponents at Mount Melleray who had been convicted at the Bishop's enquiry, and was now plotting along with him in this whole business. So that, without letting me see any of these letters, they were to be used against me, as if they contained the true verdict of my guilt and the valid and legitimate sentences of my condemnation by the two Congregations, and as if they were duly signed and authorized by the Abbot-General; whereas it was Father Symphorian himself who was doing the whole of it. This, of course, would have kept Father Symphorian's name completely out of the business. In the same way, the man at Mount Melleray was to execute the sentence, not in his own name but in the name of the Abbot of Mount Melleray who was to be kept in perfect ignorance of it all. So that, if I had left Mount Melleray, it would have appeared that it was the two Sacred Congregations, the late Abbot-General, and the Abbot of Mount Melleray that had done it all; and that neither Father Symphorian nor his accomplices at Mount Melleray had anything in the world to do with it; and the same would also appear to be superabundantly proved by the forged letters and documents bearing on the case that were to be preserved in the archives of the Monastery at Mount Melleray.

The letters clearly proving all this will be given. But these letters

will not only prove all that Father Symphorian so treacherously did in the matter, they will also marvellously reveal the whole deceptive system of artful, but somewhat crude and very palpable, legerdemain that he practised, how he did it, and who they were at the various stages that were aiding him in it, or co-operating with him throughout.

II

I now proceed to give the letters and other proofs of the above. On July 2, 1904, the following terrible letter reached Mount Melleray from Rome:—

“THE GENERAL’S OFFICE,
“ROME.
“June 28, 1904.

“My Right Reverend Father,

“I have the sad duty of informing you that Father Isidore, already so often denounced to Rome, has just been denounced once more before the Holy Office. The Holy Office has communicated this denunciation to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

“What precisely were the denunciations made against Father Isidore? We cannot tell them. What we do know is that the two Congregations (the Holy Office and the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars) have been seriously impressed by them, and that both the Congregations have decided that the proofs are sufficient to condemn this Father as a confessor. This very day our Abbot-General received from the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars a letter of which the following is a translation:—

“‘Most Reverend Father,

“‘After having considered everything “attentively” in the case of Father Isidore of Mount Melleray this Sacred Congregation has judged proper to decide that you send the aforesaid religious to another monastery; and that in this new abode faculties must not be given him unless at most for hearing the confessions of men only. This is what I have to make known to you for your guidance.

“‘June 25, 1904. D. CARD. FERRATA, Prefect.
“‘F. GUSITINI, Secretary.’”

“This letter, My Right Reverend Father, requires no comment. It is an order which our Abbot-General received from the Sacred

Congregation, and which he is obliged to give you. It remains to consider with Father Isidore what monastery it would be preferable to send him to. The thing must be done instantly and without delay. If there are reclamations to be made he must not make them before he has gone away. If we have a good advice to give him, it is to remain quiet for his own interest.

“With his regrets for having to transmit to you this sad news, our Abbot-General renews his expressions of friendship to you in union with all the Father Definitors, and I myself renew my respectful attachment in our Lord.

“FATHER SYMPHORIAN,

“Secretary to the Abbot-General.”

On the very day Father Symphorian despatched this letter from Rome, his principal associate in the secret business there started likewise from Rome for Mount Melleray. When he arrived at the Monastery his first word was that they had me down now, and that I could never rise; for that the whole weight of Rome was on top of me. His next announcement was that I should never have seen this letter, nor known anything of its contents, save only my obligation to leave the Monastery, and to leave it instantly without making any attempt to prove my innocence; and that the Abbot of Mount Melleray should not have known anything about it, nor have interfered in the case until the sentence was executed; for that it was quite understood by them all in Rome, that the letters and the management of affairs at the Monastery were then in other hands than his, and that the Abbot was not to interfere.

III

BUT though men propose it is God that disposes. The Abbot was almost completely recovered when the letter reached Mount Melleray on July 2, and instead of allowing the conspirators there to do as they pleased, to their sad chagrin and disappointment he took the letters into his own hands at once, as well as the whole administration of the affairs of the Monastery. Were it not for this, Father Symphorian's false letters would have done their evil work in perfect secrecy in the hands of my leading opponent, as they had planned in Rome that it should be done, and when I was locked up for life in prison, they would then have passed quietly into the archives of the Monastery, to remain there a false record of my alleged unutterable crimes and infamy as a priest and confessor.

As soon as the Abbot read the letters, his knowledge of the facts

of the case, and of Canon Law and mode of procedure before the Holy Office and the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, enabled him to see at once that the letters and their contents could be nothing but a bundle of trumped-up forgeries from beginning to end, and that the whole thing was being done in secret and unknown to the Abbot-General.

He, therefore, wrote back to Father Symphorian saying that the decisions against me, whether of the Holy Office or of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, could not possibly be valid or genuine, because neither Congregation, in a "contentious case" like this, could condemn me, as he pretended they did, unheard, undefended and without either the Abbot himself or me ever knowing that there was a single charge against me; that the thing was utterly impossible, and that it was the result of some of the intrigues with which the two fathers who had spent many years in Rome and knew so well the corruption that was festering in the Office of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars had been threatening me; always saying that, whether I was innocent or not, when the opportune time came they could get me condemned there through influence and money.

He then proceeded to show that the letter which was signed, or pretended to be signed by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, on June 25, in the name of the Sacred Congregation bore on the face of it many manifest proofs not only of invalidity, but of deliberate falsehood and fraud. That letter said that the Sacred Congregation condemned me after having carefully examined the case. But how could they have carefully examined a case that they had never heard? And they had never heard one word of my defence. Or how could they lawfully pass sentence of perpetual exile and imprisonment on a person who had got no opportunity of defending himself? Then he went on to state that I had got no such opportunity, nor had I ever heard that there was a single charge against me. He, moreover, pointed out that the representatives of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Abbot Eugene in September, 1903, and the Bishop of Waterford in January, 1904, only five months before had both been compelled by most overwhelming evidence to vindicate my conduct and character in the fullest manner possible, and to declare me innocent and my accusers and calumniators guilty, and that the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars could not possibly go back on that verdict and that vindication, seeing that no one had made any subsequent examination of the case for them, or could have made any without either the Abbot himself or me knowing it. To suppose, then, that either Congregation could

have condemned me was ridiculously absurd, for that in such a case and in such circumstances they had no power to do so.

The Abbot then proceeded: "You say that the Abbot-General is obliged to give the order, and then your letter translates this saying of your own into the fact that he does give the order. Here nobody can fail to see the logical fallacy. You have changed the meaning of your term, 'he is obliged to give' into 'he gives,' which makes all the difference in the world in this case. 'He gives' implies that the Abbot-General knows all about the case; 'he is obliged to give' proves that the whole thing is being carried on in secret and quite unknown to him. If he is obliged to give, why does he not do it? And why does he not sign the order himself? For as you know well his signature is a necessary element in the case before the order has anywhere any force. But this is particularly so in a remote country like Ireland; otherwise, anyone might write letters like yours from Rome, giving such orders in his name. Again when you say "the Abbot-General is obliged to give the order" that might be true if the condemnation of Father Isidore were really genuine and valid and not a forged and trumped-up one. But it is for the Abbot-General and not for you to judge and testify to this, particularly as we know that the sentence against Father Isidore could not possibly be genuine.

"That the Abbot-General does not give the order is quite plain and manifest for another reason. If he gave the order for Father Isidore to be removed to another monastery, he would have to name to me the monastery that Father Isidore is to go to and he would have to give the superior of that monastery an order to receive him. Nobody knows better than you that no one can do this but the Abbot-General, or, in his absence or incapacity, the Vicar-General, Abbot Eugene. Neither of them does it, and you dare not attempt to do it, but you leave it to me to do. And then the unlawful thing was to be done at Mount Melleray without my knowing it but in my name, when I was supposed to be dead or dying. Is it not then beyond all doubt and as manifest to me as the paper on which I write, that the Abbot-General has never given the order and knows nothing about what you are doing?

"The extraordinary statement you make towards the end of your letter, that Father Isidore must leave the Monastery instantly, without making any attempt to defend himself or his character, shows clearly that you want to keep all this that you have done a profound secret from the Abbot-General and from the world. Assuredly, for you to refuse to allow Father Isidore to defend himself and clear his character after being condemned as you allege, unheard, undefended and without ever knowing that there was any charge

against him, is a piece of tyranny and glaring injustice which surpasses anything I have ever heard. It shocks every one who has heard of it. Who, may I ask, has given you power and authority to do this? You cannot even pretend that it was either the Abbot-General or any of the Sacred Congregations, since none of them have any power to do such things and then cloak them up in this way. And knowing as you do that Father Isidore's adversaries have always been convicted at Mount Melleray as false accusers and calumniators, and found guilty also of the things of which they accused him, is it not plain that by this you are trying to screen their crimes, and the notorious crimes, as you so well know, of one of your own associates in the General's Office? But I leave Father Isidore himself to deal with that, as it is out of my jurisdiction."

I myself wrote to Father Symphorian practically repeating the same arguments as the Abbot, but quoting also the texts of Canon Law and the rules of procedure of the Sacred Congregation, showing that in a "contentious case" like mine, particularly where my rights were secured to me by a most binding bilateral contract, no tribunal or authority on earth could without hearing both sides, and particularly the defendant or accused, lawfully convict and condemn me as his letter stated that the two Congregations had done; that to act otherwise in the case was a violation of my rights and of all law human and divine, that even the Pope himself could not do, and would not attempt to do. That, therefore, this letter must be a compound of falsehood and forgery; for that no one could conceive the tribunals of the two Congregations acting as he said they did; and that there was only two explanations of all this: either he himself had deliberately forged these sentences against me, or it was done by bribed officials in the Congregations. I told him that as he well knew the priest from the General's Office in Rome, who was going through Ireland and elsewhere pretending to be a medical doctor, and pretending also to have permission from the Abbot-General and the Pope for acting as such, and their special blessings on his work, was examining thousands of women to my own knowledge and to the knowledge of every one at Mount Melleray; that he was pretending to be able to cure them of all their infirmities, and then exacting large sums of money for this under the pretence that it was only "gratuitous donations." But that, perhaps, he was not aware that the confederates of this priest at Mount Melleray had let out the secret that with this money, and the influence of another of the party who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, the two of them could get done at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars this dishonest thing that was now done against me. Moreover, that this

priest from his own office in Rome was telling his associates at Mount Melleray that, when sending their denunciations against me to Rome, they might not mind what they wrote or how they did it; for that in the translation of their letters at the General's Office they would be so changed as to make them attain their purpose.

I concluded by telling him that, if amends were not made and an end put to this, I would most assuredly endeavour to have the whole thing made known to the Pope. This I subsequently did; and this it was in the end that secured the reversal of the false sentence and full amends for all the wrong that was done me.

IV

To conclude here, though a great deal more of the infamy of this letter of June 28 will be revealed in what follows, it was not mere debatable arguments against my condemnation that we used. It was plain and acknowledged facts that we stated, facts which made it an utter and absolute impossibility that either of the two Congregations could ever have condemned me in such a way as Father Symphorian's letter asserted that they did; for if they had attempted to do so—which, of course, they did not—their decisions would not have been condemnations at all or sentences against me in any sense, but only revelations of the utter insanity or unparalleled iniquity of the men who gave them; just as if the judge proceeded to sentence the accused to death without trial, or after he had been found by the jury "innocent on all and every one of the counts." For this last was what the decisions of Abbot Eugene and the Bishop amounted to. Nor was there any power of any kind, anywhere in the Church or in the privileges and procedure of the Congregations, by which such outrageous things could be done.

The statement of my condemnation by the two Congregations was then not only essentially false, but this fundamental fact being so preposterously false, every one of the other statements in Father Symphorian's letter must of necessity be so too; for they were all founded on it though containing besides, as we have seen, a great deal of additional falsehood and infamy on their own account. Thus from the very start the whole thing was proved beyond yea or nay to be an utter fraud.

Both the Abbot and myself sent to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, copies of these letters that we sent to Father Symphorian. We sent also a full account and full proofs of the horrible charge of directly violating the seal of confession so deliberately made against me at the Bishop's sworn enquiry, and of the deliberate

perjury then committed by the two witnesses who attempted to sustain it; pointing out also how manifest it was from all the circumstances of the case that Father Symphorian's letter, and the way in which it was to be secretly executed at Mount Melleray, was a plot for shutting me up a prisoner for life in order to screen these guilty and convicted men at Mount Melleray from the punishment that the Church inflicts on those who do such things. As all this was hushed up at the office of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, it became, therefore, plain that there must be some party or parties there who were co-operating with Father Symphorian in the treacherous business. As yet, however, we could have no knowledge of who they might be.

CHAPTER II

I

I MUST confess that Father Symphorian's letter so shocked me that I knew not what to do, or whither to turn for redress and vindication. Indeed so horrible was the overwhelming and unparalleled sentence which he pretended to have been pronounced against me, that most people who knew of it thought my mind must inevitably give way under the strain and stress. The horrible wrong done me was manifest to every one who knew me, the right and justice of my case was plain and palpable also; but at the same time there seemed to be absolutely no remedy, and no mode of defence against the treacherous technicalities and formalities and the secret chicanery and red-tapeism of Father Symphorian and his accomplice in Rome. They knew this, too, in Rome and kept constantly reminding me of it and threatening me with it, by warning me that there was no remedy and that I must obey, while through other channels we learned from Rome that the Abbot-General was dying, and that there was no hope of redress through him. This was what they relied on.

In the end, however, all this only led to a more complete vindication of my character, and to a fuller and clearer exposure of the ways and means by which my alleged condemnation was effected. So that how Father Symphorian did it, who they were that assisted him in the work, how everywhere and at every turn they were detected at it, and in the end fully exposed and convicted, will be clearly seen in what follows.

The following letter to myself was received on July 17:

"ROME,

"July 13, 1904.

"My dear Father Isidore,

"Our Most Reverend Father has received your letter and that of your Abbot. He regrets not being able to give an answer according to your desire. The decision which he has transmitted to you has emanated from the Sacred Congregation. It is to the Sacred Congregation you must reply if you wish the sentence to be revoked.

"Before answering you we have informed ourselves of the things they charge you with, and here is what they have said to us. 'First, you are accused of idleness; second, you are reproached with habitual absence from the choir without reason; third, you have a tendency to converse with women even in the confessional, whilst you avoid hearing the confessions of the poor and the country people; fourth, in your manner of treating penitents you expose yourself to violate the Sacramental secrets.'

"You seem to say that Father Louis has been the great instigator of this new campaign against you. You are completely mistaken. Each time that denunciations came against you Father Louis did not want to have anything to do with them. It is I who have always translated the English letters. It is I who have gone in the name of the Definitory to answer the Assessor of the Holy Office and I have said to him:—'It is not the first time we are receiving denunciations against Father Isidore. Our Abbot-General has many times informed his Abbot of them and his Abbot has always justified Father Isidore. He has informed the immediate Superior and Inquisitor of them and he, after visitations and holding inquisitions into the charges, has always justified Father Isidore. . . .'

"Not knowing Father Isidore at all our Abbot-General cannot condemn him, but he would be glad to see an end put to these perpetual denunciations.

"This was our answer; and on this the Holy Office, not having anything on which it could proceed against you, sent the case to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and that Congregation has transmitted to us what we have communicated to your Abbot. Please, then, address this Congregation directly if you have to present any justification. The Sacred Congregation only can rescind its own decisions if there is occasion to do it. We can do nothing, and we earnestly desire to have nothing to do with this affair. Meanwhile, what you ought to do is to obey the Sacred Congregation. And by not submitting you are giving new grounds for complaints against you.

"FATHER SYMPHORIAN, Secretary."

He makes no attempt to answer the unanswerable objections that the Abbot and myself made to his letter of June 28. Though these objections clearly proved that the whole thing was a disreputable fraud he passes them over as if they were never made, thus showing how able a tactician he was in the art of deceitful evasions. And then he invents two nice little objections about Father Louis just the very contrary of ours, in order to throw dust in our eyes and make it appear to those reading his letters only that we had nothing but foolish and frivolous objections that had no weight.

He says that this father did not himself do anything in the case. But our objection was not that he did it "himself," or that he translated the letters "himself," but that "he got it done." We knew perfectly well that it was not he that translated the English letters, but Father Symphorian who did it for him and translated them falsely. Then he says that this father did not want to have anything to do with the charges made against me. But this was one of our principal objections, and an unanswerable one too, instead of being an answer to it. It was this father's bounden duty to forward the charges against me to the Abbot of Mount Melleray and to myself, in order that we might have a full and fair opportunity of refuting them, as we could easily have done. It was for this very purpose that he was supported and kept in Rome by the Monastery of Mount Melleray, just as one would employ a lawyer to appear in court and act for him there; and by not doing it he was co-operating in the most effectual way possible with my accusers and calumniators.

While he was supposed to be my legal representative in Rome he was urging and encouraging my opponents to send their false accusations against me, and then while giving me no opportunity of refuting them he was himself pleading guilty to them all in my name. This was exactly where the real source and origin of the wrong and injustice lay, for owing to it my accusers could say whatever they chose against me in Rome without any danger or fear of exposure or contradiction.

Then see the unblushing effrontery of Father Symphorian pretending in this letter that he is making more than ample amends for all this, by sending the accusations three weeks after my alleged condemnation, but still suppressing, as we shall see, the evidence that we sent proving my innocence and the guilt of my false accusers; telling me at the same time that there is no escape for me now from that condemnation, and that by not submitting to it I am heaping new guilt on my head. Where, then, was the use in now sending me the charges brought against me? And surely if I had a right to them

now, I had that right to them before I was condemned. Could anything be clearer?

But the very sending of the charges now three weeks after my alleged condemnation is another act of deception. For by suppressing the proofs of my innocence which we immediately forwarded to him, and by showing that he had sent me the charges, he was able in Rome, as he actually did, to make it appear that we had got the charges but could not refute or disprove any of them. This we shall see him doing in many of the letters that follow. So that at every turn we have new revelations of his intrigues.

II

BEFORE coming to the refutation of the charges against me as contained in this letter, we have many other proofs of the deliberate misstatements of the letter of June 28 which he thought we should never see. He said in that letter that the charges for which the Holy Office had convicted me were such that they could not be given, conveying thereby that I had been convicted by the Holy Office of the horrible crime of solicitation or of tempting to sin and immorality in the confessional; for that was the only case in which I could possibly be condemned by the Holy Office without an open trial, and full knowledge of the charges against me. And that secret letter of July 28 which we were never to see was, therefore, to remain in the archives of the Monastery, a perpetual but infamously lying record of the fact that I had been convicted by the Holy Office of that detestable crime. And in order to brand this shocking calumny deep into my character for ever, and give it the blackest hue possible, he commenced that letter of June 28 by expressing his own deep sorrow for having to announce my condemnation, and he ends it with the false expression of the great sorrow of the Abbot-General, who was dying and knew nothing about it, for having to write to the Abbot of Mount Melleray such distressing news.

There was not a circumstance that he could put into the letter of June 28—and it was plain that he was an adept at such things—but he put into it in order to show that I was thus convicted of this wrong. To give one more out of many other instances proving this: he said that I must leave the Monastery without ever attempting to prove my innocence. But it was also for this crime only that such a punishment could be inflicted on me. Therefore, there could be no doubt that it was Father Symphorian's deliberate intention to brand me for ever in that letter of June 28, which I was never to see, as found guilty and convicted by the Holy Office.

But now what are the facts? Here Father Symphorian not only gives the charges, and thus belies his statement of June 28 that the charges could not be given; but he lets us see also that he had the charges before him when he went to the Holy Office to answer them long before he wrote the letter of June 28. Yet he tries here to conceal this, too, by another falsehood, and he thinks he is concealing it by saying, "Before answering you we have now informed ourselves of the things with which they charge you." For he forgets that he is in this same letter telling us that he knew the charges long before when he went himself and answered them to the Assessor of the Holy Office. The state of mind of the man who could write that letter of July 28 is really a puzzle, for it is quite impossible for an ordinary mind to imagine anyone sitting down to invent and write such a calumny against a person he never knew.

But this is not by any means all that we find in this letter of July 13 to myself, regarding this calumny. He has now to admit that the whole thing was a deliberate lie. He tells us now that he put the proofs of my innocence himself so clearly before the Assessor of the Holy Office, testifying to him that the Abbot of Mount Melleray and the Immediate Superior and Inquisitor, Abbot Eugene, after careful and searching investigations had always found me innocent of every charge that they brought against me, and that the Abbot-General had nothing against me—he had, he tells us, to put these proofs with such convincing clearness before him that the Assessor had to decide that there was not one tittle of evidence nor any case at all against me to go before the Tribunal of the Holy Office, not even, as the lawyers say, the shadow of a *prima facie* case. Yet this is the man who, when he thought we could never detect him, wrote on June 28 that the Holy Office had condemned me of such a horrible crime.

But there is another most damaging piece of evidence unwittingly supplied by Father Symphorian against himself in this letter of July 13. He tells us now that he had himself to testify to the Assessor of the Holy Office that the Abbot-General had to inform the Immediate Superior and Inquisitor, Abbot Eugene of Melleray in France, whose report to the Abbot-General in the matter we have given above, about the charges and allegations my accusers had brought against me in Rome; and that he had also to testify himself to the Assessor, that Abbot Eugene had always found me innocent and guiltless.

This, then, proves beyond the possibility of any doubt whatever that Father Symphorian had before him the report of Abbot Eugene of May 12, 1901, which we have given above. Now, was there ever a

more complete vindication of anyone than that report supplies of my conduct and my actions as priest and confessor? Or could anyone imagine a fuller and more crushing condemnation of my accusers at Mount Melleray and of the corrupt procedure of the Roman Congregations and of their officials than that whole report of Abbot Eugene affords? Nor at this period could there possibly be against me one tittle of evidence from any source whatever before any of the Congregations in Rome, as the Bishop of Waterford in his letter of December 28, 1904, and the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in the May following will prove for us. What, then, could be more outrageously unjust and corrupt than the condemnation of me, which Father Symphorian pretends to be contained in the letter of June 25 from Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini?

It is not merely that I am condemned unheard, undefended and without ever knowing that there was any accusation in the world against me; I am secretly condemned by them after my complete innocence and the guilt of my accusers and calumniators have been fully established, and with the fullest possible proof of all this before their eyes. But, of course, Father Symphorian fell into this trap that he had laid for me, because he and his accomplices in Rome never suspected that we could beard them with the full text of Abbot Eugene's report of his official Inquisition at Mount Melleray as supplied to the Abbot-General. They imagined that they were playing their legerdemain tricks in perfect security and secrecy, and that we could never by any possibility get behind the curtains to explore what they were doing, and expose their guilt.

III

THERE is yet another thing that must be mentioned before the false charges are dealt with.

Father Symphorian does not give us the name of my accuser, and we shall soon see that he had good reasons for withholding it. But the Prefect and Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars did not know these reasons quite so well as he did; and so writing on August 21, 1904, as we will see, they gave the name. I do not intend to give it here; because being a private individual I do not wish, whatever he may have done privately and secretly, to hold him up to public opprobrium. With regard, then, to my accuser, he was over and over again branded, as every man in the General's Office in Rome, and Father Symphorian particularly, knew, as an infamous calumniator, according to the laws of the Church and as one to whose

word no credence must be given in such cases, on account of having been so often convicted of making these same false charges at Rome and elsewhere against me, and branded in the same way for having made similar charges against many others in the past.

He is the person who in Abbot Eugene's report of June 12, 1901, is so often bracketed with the other jealous and envious confessor as a calumniator; Abbot Eugene there telling us that every one of his denunciations against me were not only absolutely groundless and without any foundation, but that they sprung from pride, envy and other evil motives, and that it was those who were making them that were guilty of the things of which they accused me. According to that same report and the sworn evidence of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, it was he along with the other confessor who was boasting that they were going to keep up these unfounded denunciations to Rome against me, to return to them so often and to be so persistent that no matter how groundless and false they might be, the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars would in the end condemn me, to get rid of their persistence and for the sake of peace. According to Abbot Eugene, it was he also whose motto in my regard was, "We can calumniate, we can denounce Father Isidore to Rome, if that succeeds we shall have gained our point; if it does not succeed we shall be nothing the worse, and we can commence again."

He was convicted of these things at every one of the investigations held at Mount Melleray, particularly in 1900 and 1903; and again at the Bishop's sworn enquiry, when on oath he had to testify himself to the groundlessness of his own charges and denunciations. But the documents proving all this were in their hands when they were pretending to condemn me on his mere word.

And before I had ever met him he had been similarly branded, as Father Symphorian well knew, for making the same sort of false and malicious charges against many others not only in Ireland, but in America and Australia; one of the Australian cases being a public scandal in the press of that country. This was all well known to every single member of the General's Office in Rome, and to every Abbot of the Cistercian Order; so that this habit of making false charges and accusations was regarded as a mania that he could not overcome. It had been so decided by the General Chapter of the Order. This is why Abbot Eugene in his report of June 10, 1901, to the Abbot-General, refers to his past notorious career in America and elsewhere. He could, therefore, lose nothing by now falsely denouncing me, for his character was so black in this respect that nothing could make it blacker. But it is the law of the Church and the rule of the Congregations in Rome, founded on common sense and common justice,

that no one must ever be secretly condemned on such charges coming from such an accuser and convicted calumniator. So that even before coming to the refutation of the charges the case brands itself in many ways as a monstrous and unpardonable iniquity.

IV

WITH regard to the accusations themselves it would, of course, be quite sufficient to point out that every one of them was already many times proved and declared to be false, and entirely without foundation, and that the overwhelming proofs of this were forwarded to Rome, in the first place, in the official reports sent there by the Regular Visitor and Inquisitor of the Monastery, Abbot Eugene, Vicar-General of the Order. There were at least three of these reports made conjointly by Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus White, and made by them after they had held most searching investigations into every one of the charges. These reports covered every hour of the time down to the very moment when this father made the charges against me, for it was September, 1903, that he did so, and this was the date of Abbot Eugene's last report; and these decisions bound the Sacred Congregations as much as or even more than a true and lawful verdict of the jury would bind a judge. How, then, could the Congregation have found me guilty? Every one of these investigations exculpated me in the fullest and most perfect manner possible from every one of these charges even to the smallest item, at the same time proving the accusations to be without a shadow of excuse, but springing altogether from spite and jealousy or from other evil motives on the part of my accusers; naming the father now accusing me always and in every case as one of the principal of them, and declaring that it was he and his associates that were guilty of the things with which they charged me. Nothing, for instance, could be fuller or clearer than Abbot Eugene's report given above of June 12, 1901, showing my innocence and the guilt of my accusers. The report of 1903 was even stronger. But Father Symphorian has himself testified to this; for he says in this very letter of July 13 to myself that Abbot Eugene after making his visitations and investigations had always justified me without a single exception; and that justification covers every one of the charges and accusations given above down to the very last moment and to the very smallest item.

The next proof forwarded to Rome of my innocence of these charges and allegations was the report of the Bishop's sworn enquiry showing that they were false and groundless; the Bishop, after having

carried them himself to Rome for the accusers, being obliged to declare that he could not do otherwise than declare me innocent after the sworn testimony of so many, and such witnesses that proved me to be so. And this father who was now my accuser in Rome, when on oath at the Bishop's enquiry at Mount Melleray, had to admit my innocence and the groundlessness of his own charges and allegations. But here we have him at the very same time, secretly and in the dark, bringing the same charges and allegations against me in Rome; and we have the Sacred Congregation convicting me, or a pretence that it has convicted me, of them on his mere word and denunciation. But the Sacred Congregation itself on May 10, 1905, had, as we shall see, to testify that the Bishop's sworn enquiry proved me innocent of every one of the charges that this convicted calumniator brought against me. Could there be any evidence in the world stronger than this? Then came the evidence of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, who also testified on oath that he had examined on the spot and at the time every one of the charges and accusations made against me, and that he had found every one of them, like Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus White and the Bishop, to be without foundation or excuse; and that it was the men that were accusing me who were guilty of the things with which they were charging me.

The Abbot of Mount Melleray produced also innumerable letters and documents, such as have been given in the earlier chapters, and many other far stronger proofs, showing the falsehood and impossibility of these charges and accusations, and that it was my accusers that were guilty. And the men in Rome knew all this when they were pretending to condemn me.

We now come to the charges and accusations taken separately, for we must leave no possible or even imaginable loophole. With regard to the charge of idleness, ten members of the community testified to its falsehood. Of course, many more would have done the same, but this was superabundant evidence. They testified that from the time I had entered the Monastery down to the end of July, 1896, I went constantly with the other members of the community to the manual labour; and that no one either of the lay or choir brethren laboured more industriously or attended to their duties with such regularity as I did. Up to that date I had never been even once absent from the common or manual labour—a thing that could not be said about any other member of the community. In the end of July, 1896, I was appointed confessor in the public church, and the gentlemen's guest house at the Monastery; and in these places I heard at least three times as many confessions as the other five confessors taken together,

and did more for the community in one day than the father accusing me did in a month; for he did nothing at all except what pleased himself. The ten members of the community who gave evidence in the case testified on oath to this.

With regard to the second charge, "absence from choir without any reason for it," the same witnesses testified that down to the end of July, 1896, I never missed a choir duty of any kind; and that down to 1902 I attended also every one of the choir duties, unless when specially and legitimately dispensed for other more urgent and pressing duties—a thing which the rules and regulations admit and even enjoin; that from 1902 until the date of these accusations, I was legitimately and validly dispensed from choir duties by the doctor on account of my infirmities, and dispensed also by the Abbot of the Monastery, and that these dispensations were duly ratified by the Regular Visitor; so that there could be no doubt that the dispensations were valid and licit. The accusation was, therefore, deliberately false; and malicious also especially for the following reasons:—In the first place my infirmities resulting from a broken ankle were known to all, rendering it impossible for me to stand in choir, and no one was ever asked to attend choir duties in such circumstances; in the next place, it was announced to the community that I was dispensed from choir for these reasons, and yet I always attended choir when at all able; in the third place my accuser had not attended choir at Mount Melleray for more than thirty years, though almost all the time well able to attend. Nor could he have any dispensation because there was no reason in the world why he should be dispensed, and such dispensations cannot in the Cistercian Order be licitly or even validly given without cause. Besides this, there were at least twelve others who did not attend choir, and more than half of them had never been dispensed. But on the contrary they had been commanded to attend to their choir duties. Why, then, was I singled out to be denounced to Rome for what I was not guilty of at all—while the real guilty ones were allowed to go scot free—and denounced by the most guilty man in the whole community on the point? Surely the man coming into court as a public accuser in such a case should come with clean hands.

The third accusation was "that I had a tendency to converse with women even in the confessional while I avoided the hearing of the confessions of the poor penitents and of the working people from the country." This was the same accusation that was made by the same man at the Bishop's sworn enquiry in January, 1904. And the same overwhelming evidence which was given at that enquiry proving

its falsehood was now given again while new refutations of the charge and new proofs of its falsehood were super-added.

The first part of this charge is "that I have a tendency to converse with women." Now to start with, from the day I entered Mount Melleray in 1893, down to the time when this charge was made against me in 1903, I never even once spoke to a woman alone outside the confessional; and during all that time only to three women at most, in the presence and in company of others, and not more than five or six minutes on any of these occasions. I was the sole and only person at Mount Melleray who did not converse with women, and every one of my accusers when on oath had to admit this. Five witnesses swore to the positive fact that I did not during those twelve years converse with any woman; swearing likewise that I refused to meet any of them at the lodge. The Abbot also swore that I had refused to meet them anywhere. And how did this father or anyone else know my tendency except by my acts? And my acts proved the opposite.

But the accusation states that I have a tendency of conversing with women "even in the confessional." Of course, it is easy to make accusations of this kind in secret when one is not called on to give any proof of them. But I demanded when and with whom I had conversed in the confessional. Two names and two only were given in the end, and these names were forwarded to Rome by my accusers at Mount Melleray, when they thought we could never get them. The one was the aunt of Father T., the other Miss M. Now, what was the result? The "Aunt of Father T." testified that she had never in her whole life spoken one word to me, either in the confessional or outside it. Miss M. testified that she had never spoken to me outside the confessional, and that she had never spoken or conversed with me in the confessional, except to make her confession to me. Besides she testified that she had not been to confession to me during the time that the accusations covered. But was the accusation not on the face of it an absurdity and an impossibility? For my accusers could know nothing about what occurred in the confessional.

The second part is "that I avoided or refused to hear the confessions of the poor people and the working men of the country." This was again proved to be equally false by the same evidence by which it was proved to be so at the Bishop's sworn enquiry showing the number of poor penitents and working people that I heard; in fact, that up to this I had practically heard them all. But in addition to all that overwhelming evidence fully a hundred witnesses of every rank and class and from every part of the country now gave

evidence, showing that I heard almost all the poor and all the working people, who went to confession in Mount Melleray from their neighbourhood, that they had never heard of my refusing to hear any poor person's or any working man's confession, and that they had always heard me praised as a confessor for my kindness to the poor, and my readiness to oblige them by hearing their confessions when the other confessors had refused. The sacristan of the church, who was a priest of the Order, and the assistant sacristan, who was a layman of the neighbourhood, and the tradesmen employed in repairing the church testified to the same, and to the fact that they had often heard it remarked that I heard nearly all the confessions of the poor and the working people. And they had never heard or known of a single case of my refusing to hear any poor person or any working man. And no case was ever produced where I refused to hear any man's, or any poor person's, confession, but dozens of cases, such as the case of Patrick McGrath already given, were proved against both my accusers. Where, once more, are the clean hands? And why are these ugly false accusations so often repeated?

The fourth and last accusation is "that by my manner of treating the penitents I exposed myself to the violation of the Sacramental secrets." It would require a universal negative to disprove this charge; which, as every one knows, is impossible in such a case. Unless I disproved them *ad infinitum* there might still be a case within the limits of possibility, and that last possible case on the road to infinity or infinity itself might still prove the case against me. It is manifest that this charge and the previous one have been carefully formulated in this vague way, in order to make direct refutation impossible. Perhaps, then, the best proof of the falsehood and dishonesty of this charge is the way in which it is brought against me. In what case, or when or where, did I do this thing that exposed me to violate the Sacramental seal? Or what proof was ever produced of my having done it? None at all; and no case could ever be produced against me. Surely, therefore, in such a case what is asserted without proof can be denied without proof. But there is one argument that disproves this charge as much as such a charge in such circumstances could possibly be disproved, and the same argument equally disproves the whole of the previous charge.

Almost all the penitents came to me. This was proved at every one of the enquiries by dozens upon dozens of witnesses, and had to be admitted by all. It was again proved on this occasion by numerous other witnesses and can still be proved by hundreds. Now is it possible that they would all come to confession to me if the sins they confessed would be in danger of being heard by

every one as the charge implies? The thing is utterly absurd, and it is equally absurd to suppose that they would all come to confession to me if I were the sort of confessor that the previous charge implied.

All this mass of evidence so fully and completely establishing my innocence, as well as all the evidence given at the many various enquiries at Mount Melleray that did the same, was now forwarded directly to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and forwarded also to it indirectly through Father Symphorian, the General's Office, and the Abbots of the General Chapter in France.

But the great importance of this evidence does not lie solely in the fact that it so overwhelmingly exposes and refutes the charges and allegations they made against me nor even that it so clearly proves the dishonesty of my accusers and of Father Symphorian's letter of June 28. All that indeed is more than sufficiently proved otherwise. Its importance lies mainly, and in a very special manner, in the fact that on many occasions and particularly on May 11 following, we shall find Father Symphorian and the new Abbot-General writing to us from Rome that I have not said one word to justify myself or clear my character from these charges. Our main object now is to unveil and expose the secret machinations of this treacherous system that was at work in Rome; and that assertion will then prove for us beyond yea or nay that Father Symphorian and his accomplices in the Sacred Congregation intercepted all this evidence in my favour; and that they put forged evidence against me, as we shall see, in its place. Thus, with the machinery that they had at work, though we might send tons of evidence, it was all of no use. Because, until our detective and our lawyer caught them at it and exposed them, they had only to intercept our evidence and then declare that we had sent none at all. This is what in Rome they will prove for us themselves.

CHAPTER III

I

HERE is Father Symphorian's letter to the Abbot on the same occasion:

" ABBOT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
" ROME.

" July 13, 1914.

" My Right Reverend Father,

" You will see from the letter I send Father Isidore that our Abbot-General cannot interfere in any way in the question of that

dear Father. It is to the Sacred Congregation he must write if he thinks it proper. It is possible that Father Isidore is innocent of the more grave charges they have brought against him. It is scarcely possible, however, that there may not be something after so many repeated denunciations on the same subject. He must be a strange eccentric priest (pretre, original), exciting jealousies about confessions and the enmity of his brethren, and disposing them to make denunciations against him that may have more or less foundation. The general peace seems to demand that he should be put aside. If he is a holy priest, as you say, he ought to humbly obey the Sacred Congregation, and cry not out so loudly that he will bring his case if necessary even before the Sovereign Pontiff himself. This certainly is not the language of a holy priest or an humble monk. If you think well of it he can address the Sacred Congregation, but then he will have to open legal proceedings against his calumniators and expose the crimes you speak of. All that will not be calculated to bring peace to the house. The best thing assuredly would be for the Bishop who held the Inquisition in the month of January to write to the Sacred Congregation to exculpate Father Isidore according to his conscience as Bishop; but still, on the other hand, in order to have peace in Mount Melleray the departure of the Father at least for a time seems very desirable. You yourself before God know what is right and best to do, and seeing things with your own eyes you can decide better what to do, than we who are far away from them and only hear of them. We are neither for nor against Father Isidore. We only desire one thing, the good of Mount Melleray. Father Louis, who is quite innocent in the case, has left fifteen days ago, and was to go directly to London. Where is he at present? We know nothing about him.

“We are truly happy to learn, my Right Reverend Father, that you have recovered. We were praying much for you at the moment of danger and God be blessed and praised for having heard our prayers.

“FATHER SYMPHORIAN,

“Secretary to the Abbot-General.”

In this letter we again find clear proofs of the fact that I never was condemned and never could have been condemned by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, nor, indeed, by anyone else except by Father Symphorian himself. He says to the Abbot of Mount Melleray that the Abbot can do, and has the right to do, what he thinks best in the case, with regard to carrying out the alleged sentence against me, merely suggesting that I might leave the Monastery for a little time “for the sake of peace.” But where,

then, was the sentence of my condemnation by the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation; which both the Abbot and Father Symphorian would have been bound under the severest penalties to carry out to the very letter of the law, if it ever existed? Where was it when, in direct opposition to it, Father Symphorian could give the Abbot leave to do as he pleased? Of course, there is only one possible reason why Father Symphorian could give this permission and this power to the Abbot, and that was because the sentence never was given by the Congregation against me, but was a dishonest fabrication of Father Symphorian and of his accomplices in the office of the Sacred Congregation.

There can be no other reason; for otherwise he could no more allow the Abbot to withhold the sentence, if it had any real and valid existence, than I could reprieve the man sentenced to death for murder. This is manifest, for he had no more power or jurisdiction over any sentence given by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars than I had. He acknowledges this in almost every one of his letters, and he himself and the new Abbot-General emphasizing, as we shall see, in the strongest terms the fact that the Congregation alone can rescind its own decisions, will prove it for us beyond yea or nay, in their letter of November 17 following; for there can be no such powerful evidence against these men as their own acts and their own statements contradicting and convicting themselves and one another.

II

FURTHERMORE, from beginning to end, this letter is almost one continued proof that the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars never condemned me and never could have condemned me. In the first place, according to this letter, what are the sole and only proofs we find they had against me in Rome? Why, absolutely nothing but the perpetual denunciations which Father Symphorian himself had to prove to be so false before the Assessor of the Holy Office, and which we have seen proved by such overwhelming evidence, and officially branded as so false and infamous, by Abbot Eugene in his letter of June 12, 1901; nothing but denunciations made by the men who were found to be so glaringly and manifestly guilty of the very things with which they accused me.

And Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus have both told us in that letter of June 12, 1901, that these "denunciations" have sprung from pride, envy and jealousy, and from other evil motives without my having given any cause or occasion for them. Surely, then, such denunciations that were so often proved to be so false

and so malicious could be no grounds for my condemnation but only the very strongest evidence of my innocence and of malice of my accusers. And is not the man who knowingly makes them in Rome, where I cannot defend myself, an excuse and a pretence for my condemnation, quite as guilty, if not more so, than the first originators of them at Mount Melleray? And this is the man who is paid and kept in Rome to defend my innocence. When he talks of the frequency of these false denunciations of which my accusers have always, and so often, been proved convicted, does he not prove that it is they that should have been punished? And when he makes this a proof that I might be guilty of something and should, therefore, be punished, as we saw in the letter of June 28, does he not prove the unspeakable infamy of the system that was at work in Rome? If this were so, where was the advantage of being innocent and of being so often and so overwhelmingly proved to be so? And does the frequency of the guilt and conviction of my accusers not surely add to their criminalty? Yet in order to save them, it is I, who have been found innocent, that must be punished for it all and branded for ever as a criminal. What unscrupulous and unblushing effrontery!

The next thing we see in this letter is that I should be victimized "for the sake of peace," no matter how innocent I might be. And, as seen also in Abbot Eugene's letter, this is the very thing that my convicted calumniator at Mount Melleray, "who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well," boasted that when the opportune time came he could, and would, get done against me in Rome, no matter how guilty he might be proved to be, or how completely my innocence might be established.

Does this not prove also that in Rome Father Symphorian was the accomplice of these men at Mount Melleray, carrying out for them their insidious plots?

Then he makes the very crimes of my accusers an argument against me, and a reason why I should be victimized; for he says if I expose their crimes in Rome that will not bring peace to the community; and that, therefore, my removal from the Monastery was very desirable in order that these things may not be exposed in Rome. Could anyone be deceived by this? And he knew both from the Abbot of Mount Melleray and from Abbot Eugene's report, which he tells us he quoted for the Assessor of the Holy Office, that these men were always convicted of these crimes. So that the only reason now for my conviction is the proven guilt of my accusers. Could anyone have proved against Father Symphorian the whole case in all its bearings more clearly and fully than he here does himself? But, then, after these two letters that we have been examining, what is

to be thought of Father Symphorian's letter of June 28. Did any man ever prove a clearer case against himself?

There is, however, one argument against me in this letter which at first sight might appear to have an air of plausibility. He says that if I were an humble and a holy priest I should obey the Sacred Congregation. But as we then knew, and proved to be a fact afterwards, the pretended condemnation of the Congregation was, and could be, nothing but a forgery trumped up by Father Symphorian and his accomplices. This was the very point on which we afterwards convicted them. So that this again only means that though innocent I should allow myself to be convicted and branded in order to save Father Symphorian and his confederates in Rome who were plotting and acting against me. I was supposed to allow myself to be made the scapegoat for them all.

III

WE next see how he abuses me for daring to speak about writing to the Pope. But in that respect I must be even worse than he here describes me. For I did write even to His Holiness—as I had a perfect right to do—and with the fatal result to these men in Rome, that after a fierce struggle their whole plots were unmasked and their guilt fully exposed, proved and acknowledged on May 10 following at the office of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars itself.

But while attacking me for daring to think of writing to the Pope, Father Symphorian tells us to write to the Sacred Congregation, and to get the Bishop also to write there. Now, this does give the whole letter an air of truth and a tone of justice and fair play, which makes one feel that Father Symphorian is truthful and trustworthy, and that one is perfectly safe in his hands. But "*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*," and Troy's wooden horse could not contain more deceit than Father Symphorian's letters. We shall have to wait a little until we see him getting all these letters in my favour, which were sent by the Bishop and others, intercepted or purloined by the officials at the office of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and find them using false documents instead, in order to get me more secretly and securely condemned on their authority; and persistently continuing to do this even after we detected them at it, until at last we proved and exposed it all in Rome through our detective and our lawyer. So that the meaning of this very plausible talk is that we may write and get as much as we please written to the Sacred Congregation, because what we write there will be intercepted

or purloined. But we must not dare to write to the Pope, for our letters might get through to His Holiness as they really did, and might harm the men who were doing all this against me in Rome.

IV

THERE is a great deal more insidious chicanery in this part of the business, but I must hurry on to what is even worse than anything we have yet seen, if indeed there could be anything worse. Before leaving the subject, however, the question may be asked:—"Is it at all possible that the Sacred Congregation as a judicial tribunal, unmindful of justice, and forgetting the limitations of its power and jurisdiction, did give this astounding sentence, as Father Symphorian represents it to have done in the French translation contained in his letter of June 28, 1904? Well, with great difficulty on December 7 following I got from the new Abbot-General an authentic copy of the original Italian letter, as signed, or pretended to have been signed, by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini on June 25, 1904, and there, I find, first that Father Symphorian has himself interpolated in his French translation of that letter the word "attentivement" (attentively), to make it appear that the judges had themselves "attentively" examined the facts and proofs and evidence of the case; whereas they had done no such thing, for the word "attentivement" does not appear in the Italian. And how could they have "attentively examined" what they never heard, for they never heard a word of my defence, and there appears no charge or evidence against me. Then he uses the French words "jugé" and "décidé" (judged and decided), which means that the tribunal of the Congregation has found me guilty and passed a formal sentence of condemnation against me—to translate the Italian "ritiene opportuno" with the subjunctive following it, which in the circumstances merely indicated an opinion, or at most a permission or willingness on the part of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to permit that the Abbot-General may do the thing if he found the case proved against me. Now, that was the meaning of the words in the original Italian, and that was at most all that these two officials of the Congregation could do or had any jurisdiction to do. We shall find in fact in his letter of January 17 that Father Symphorian himself has to admit this. But that permission, or whatever it was, meant nothing at all, for the Abbot-General had that power always. It was much the same as if the King's Bench having decided that the magistrates or justices at petty sessions had power or jurisdiction to decide a case where some one was charged with a particular offence, the writer

should then convert that decision of the King's Bench into a verdict of guilty, and a sentence of condemnation against the accused. This is what Father Symphorian did. Thus, as in the case of the Holy Office, we once more see that it was Father Symphorian himself that had secretly concocted the verdict of my guilt and the sentence of my condemnation by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

Then he declares that, under that false sentence which he has concocted himself, the Abbot-General "is obliged to give" the order for my removal and perpetual incarceration; and in the next sentence he changes that phrase again into the fact that the Abbot-General "gives that order." So, therefore, we now find from the very words of the letter which Father Symphorian used to prove that the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars found me guilty and condemned me, that it is himself that has dishonestly done it all.

But in addition to this the document that purported to be a decision of the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, as contained in Father Symphorian's letter of June 28, was no decision of any Tribunal whatever. It was merely a "hasty note" given to Father Symphorian by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini who, we shall find, were his accomplices in the whole business, and hurriedly given to him in order to enable him to carry out his plot in secret, when they thought in Rome that the Abbot-General and the Abbot of Mount Melleray were out of the way. Every step in the case reveals new phases of fraud and deceit.

V

THOUGH things already looked very suspicious with regard to the conduct of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, yet up to this stage in the business there was no positive proof that they knew the injustice they were doing me, or that they were deliberately co-operating with Father Symphorian in this campaign. As far as we yet knew for certain they might have been deceived. But now we informed them of all that Father Symphorian had done in their name, sending them full copies of his letters and calling on them to undo the wrong and injustice done or to defend their own conduct. Instead, however, of putting things right or doing me justice, or of making any enquiry whatever into the truth of the charges and allegations, they at once set about screening Father Symphorian's guilt by a piece of the most artful chicanery that could possibly be imagined.

The following letter was posted in Rome on August 21, 1904,

and received on the 24th at Mount Melleray, the late Abbot-General having died on the 17th, four days before the letter was written. The dates are most important, because the reader will find in the very next letter we give that both Father Symphorian and the new Abbot-General have testified to the fact that it was in this letter that the late Abbot-General gave the order for my removal from Mount Melleray and my incarceration elsewhere; and to make it appear possible that he had done so they also state that this letter was written on July 28, which would be three weeks before his death. Here is the letter:

“ SACRED CONGREGATION OF BISHOPS AND REGULARS.

“ Right Rev. Father,

“ This Congregation having taken note of what Father A. exposed to it about Father Isidore Mooney has commanded that it be re-written, as in fact it has been re-written on this 18th day of July. In decisis.

“ Please make this known to the Abbot of Mount Melleray.

“ God protect your Reverence.

“ (Signed) D. CARDINAL FERRATA, Prefect.

“ PHILIP GUISTINI, Secretary.

ROME, *August 21, 1904.*

To the Rev. Procurator-General of the Reformed Cistercians.

Then certifying to the genuineness and date of this document there follows:—“ This is a true copy of the original,”

“ (Signed) BROTHER BENEDICT CHAMBON,

“ Abbot and Procurator-General.”

This is the whole letter on the subject, and it certainly is a regular Delphic oracle; it pretends to give information but it is careful to give none at all on the points on which information is required, namely, as to what it is for which I am condemned, or on what grounds or evidence am I condemned, or what is the condemnation? The letter could be made to mean anything; and all the critics and canonists in the world could not in the circumstances of the case fix a definite meaning to it. Then again, by saying that “ something is re-written ” without saying what that “ something ” is, it throws in Star-Chamber fashion a shielding cloak of perfect secrecy over all Father Symphorian’s doings and over what he had interpolated in the French translation of their own letter; for it might be what Father Symphorian wrote in his French translation that was in their letter of June 25, or it might not. No one could decide the matter

from this letter of August 21, and that would make it impossible for us to prove anything against him.

This letter is a fine illustration of the many things that make it so difficult, and indeed impossible in most cases, for any outsider to detect, or at least prove, the wrong-doing of these men, operating as they are so far away and in secret behind their unintelligible technicalities and formalities, and with such a secret and mysterious system of chicanery and red-tapeism at work. Each of them does his part in secret; and then when an outsider tries to get at the root of things and find out who has done the wrong, he cannot discover who has been responsible for this thing or that which has been done; so that when they are leagued together to screen one another in some shady transaction like this, guilt or responsibility cannot as a rule be brought home directly and specifically to any of them in particular.

I have said that the letter was a regular Delphic oracle meant only to deceive and keep us in the dark. We were able, however, for once to solve the mystery because we had now a secret agent watching them at the office of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and we knew almost as well as themselves all that was going on there.

Here, then, is what was done. At this date, July 18, we had already—just the day before—received Father Symphorian's letter of July 13 to myself. That letter contained the pretended accusations against me, therefore we could no longer say that we had not received the charges and accusations, and they even give the name of my accuser. The General's Office, which in the case practically meant Father Symphorian and the Irish Monk who was co-operating with him, took my place before the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, to plead there in my name if I had any defence to make. Therefore, I could not say that I was undefended, so that we could no longer plead that I was condemned unheard, undefended or without receiving the charges against me. Here, then, we have what would appear to be all the formalities, technicalities and legalities of a full and fair trial; but as anyone can see not one of the realities. Now all they wanted was the evidence that would seem to prove my guilt. This was not the only thing wanting, and they forged in the Bishop's name a false report of his sworn enquiry of January 6, 1904, this false report purporting to find me guilty. At the same time every word of the overwhelming evidence that proved my innocence was suppressed by the men who pretended in the name of the General's Office to be my advocates. By this piece of dishonesty I was not made to appear legally convicted by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops

and Regulars. But to pass over the other unrealities of this sham procedure, the Bishop on December 28 proved that he did not send his report until July 31, instead of before the 18th. And when they had to produce that genuine report of the Bishop on May 10, 1905, after Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had intercepted it for many months, they had also to admit that it proved me innocent of all and every one of the charges brought against me. But now what makes the deliberate guilt of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini manifest and palpable is not merely the forgery of the false report of the Bishop of Waterford's sworn enquiry—for it might still be said that some one else forged it and palmed it off on them; but the fact that they deliberately intercepted the Bishop's genuine report of July 31 until we compelled them to produce it; and the still stronger fact that we notified them that the Bishop's genuine report was in their office, both through the new Abbot-General, and through letters addressed to their own office; and, moreover, through other letters addressed for personal delivery to Cardinal Ferrata at his private address, No. 2, Ara Colli, Rome. Consequently from now on there can be no doubt that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini were quite as culpable as Father Symphorian himself.

I have said that we knew these facts from our detective in Rome just as if we were behind the screen. It is not our private agent or detective, however, but Father Symphorian, the Abbot-General, the Bishop of Waterford and Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini themselves and their writings that we shall put into the witness-box to prove every one of these facts up to the very hilt.

VI

BEFORE producing this evidence, however, we must follow Father Symphorian a little further and see how he was manipulating matters elsewhere and otherwise. We sent all the evidence, we have given up to this, to the General Chapter of the Abbots of the Order held at Citeaux in France in September, 1904; we pointed out the strict obligation that the General Chapter was under of putting the whole truth and the evidence in support of it, which we forwarded to them, before the tribunal.

Father Symphorian was secretary of the General Chapter, as well as of the Abbot-General, the same person being always secretary of both; so he again intercepted these documents and this evidence and they never reached the General Chapter at all. When proved guilty of this by the Abbot of Mount Melleray at the next General

Chapter in 1905, the deceptive excuse he made was that as I was condemned on the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry held on January 6 previous and as the General's Office and the General Chapter had nothing to do with that report, and had no right to see it, therefore, he had intercepted my appeal of the previous year to them, and the evidence I had sent supporting that appeal. There were just two little flaws in this excuse, but though little they were very vital. The Bishop's report on which Father Symphorian pretended that the Sacred Congregation had condemned me was not the Bishop's report at all, but a document forged by themselves in Rome; and the Bishop's report was not forwarded at all until seven weeks after my condemnation, and then it proved my innocence and the wrong and injustice of that condemnation. Thus we find Father Symphorian everywhere using false documents against me, and stopping up every channel through which truth and justice might seek a passage. Then, as we shall see, to crown all this we shall find him declaring that I have produced nothing to justify myself, or disprove any of the charges against me.

VII

To understand Father Symphorian's conduct now, and particularly in what follows, it is necessary to keep well in memory that the late Abbot-General died on August 17, and to keep clearly, too, before the mind what Father Symphorian did and wrote on July 13 while the late Abbot-General was yet alive; as well as to remember that the new Abbot-General knew nothing at all about the case, or about what Father Symphorian had done or written during the late Abbot-General's lifetime with regard to it—save and except only what Father Symphorian himself might be pleased to tell him.

Henceforward, to understand the part played at this time by him, these are vital points to be kept constantly before the mind; for Father Symphorian's hope of escaping detection lies in the expectation that these things will, in the confusion he has created, have escaped notice or that they cannot all be remembered or fully exposed by us.

CHAPTER IV

I

WE now come to the first letter received from the new Abbot-General. Though signed by him it was every word except the signature from beginning to end in the handwriting of Father

Symphorian. This is a vital point, for several statements in it are manifestly deliberate falsehoods on Father Symphorian's part, and could be nothing else as the facts of the case and his own letters fully prove; whereas the new Abbot-General, though signing the letter, could know little or nothing about the truth or falsehood of what it contains. He had to rely entirely on Father Symphorian's word; and, as I have said, the letter is in Father Symphorian's handwriting. As Father Symphorian's two letters of July 13 prove that his letter of June 28 was false, so this letter will prove that every word in these two letters was also false, and meant to deceive. But, above all, this letter will prove its own unparalleled dishonesty and its own naked and unblushing falsehoods.

“GENERAL'S OFFICE,

“ROME.

“*November 13, 1904.*

“My Right Reverend Father,

“From a long letter of Father Isidore, who is still seeking to prove his innocence, I learn that this father is still at Mount Melleray, and I am much surprised at it.

“You know that on July 28 last the sentence of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars against Father Isidore was communicated to you by the Procurator-General. It was a formal order given to our Abbot-General and by the Abbot-General to yourself, to make Father Isidore leave Mount Melleray and to send him to another monastery, where he will no longer be a confessor unless of men only. The Sacred Congregation must have had good reasons for passing this sentence against him, in which the General's Office had nothing to do. The Sacred Congregation is not in the habit of giving such decisions without being well informed.

“However this may be, the Sacred Congregation has given an order and our conscience imposes upon us the obligation of executing it.

“Moreover we do not wish to incur the serious consequences of disobeying it. This is why I find myself obliged to reiterate to you the formal order which my predecessor Dom Sebastian gave you in the month of July. Please, then, fulfil immediately the promise you gave us at Citeaux, namely, to send Father Isidore to New Melleray. You can, however, send him to any other Monastery of the Order.

“You understand that it is conscience that makes us speak as we do; and that if the order which we give you to-day is not promptly executed, we will be obliged to act against you in spite of ourselves. It is quite useless for Father Isidore to write to us to get the sentence changed. We can do nothing and we will have nothing more to do

with it. Let him commence to obey. That is the best way of showing to all that he is animated with a good spirit.

“(Signed) AUGUSTIN MARRE,
“ Abbot-General.”

This is an astounding letter; the number of false statements made in it is beyond all reckoning, and the way in which it contradicts all that has been said by Father Symphorian in the past unparalleled by anything we have yet seen. Of course, the letter is not written with any hope of deceiving the Abbot or myself; for as the reader can easily see for himself, Father Symphorian knew too well that to do this by such a letter would be a hopeless task. But it is written to throw dust in the eyes of the new Abbot-General, who knows little or nothing about the glaring untruthfulness of its contents. And, moreover, as the letter itself towards the end shows, Father Symphorian thinks that we shall never have an opportunity of exposing these things, for we are forbidden to write to the New Abbot-General anything more on the subject.

In the first place, see how he begins the letter by contemptuously referring to my vain and foolish attempts to prove my innocence after being proved so manifestly guilty; the only proof of my guilt, however, being my condemnation by the Sacred Congregation. But who could believe that the writer is the man who has himself concocted that false sentence of condemnation and made it appear the decision of the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation; and this after my innocence had been to his own knowledge so completely and so often established. And now he uses his own false sentence and his forgery, or what amounts to forgery, and all the wrongs he has thereby done me in order to prove my guilt. And if anyone could yet doubt that it was he that concocted and interpolated or forged that false sentence into the letter of the Sacred Congregation of June 25, he will find Father Symphorian himself compelled to admit it in his letter of January 17, 1905, which will soon be given (see page 142).

The next thing to be noted in this letter of November 13 is that Father Symphorian here states in the plainest and clearest terms, and in the most circumstantial and positive manner in which words could express it, that it was the late Abbot-General himself and the Procurator-General that sent my condemnation by the Sacred Congregation to Mount Melleray, and that it was they that gave the Abbot of Mount Melleray the order for my removal from the Monastery and incarceration elsewhere.

According to this letter of November 13, Father Symphorian had

nothing in the world to do with the whole business of sending the condemnation or giving the order or writing the letters; in fact, his name never occurs even once in this letter so independent is he of the whole business. Indeed, it would seem from this letter that Father Symphorian was only a myth. To realize his effrontery, it must also be remembered that this letter was written to the Abbot of Mount Melleray and by Father Symphorian himself; and to make it plain to the new Abbot-General that what he writes cannot be contradicted by the Abbot or anyone else, he says to the Abbot of Mount Melleray, "You know" that all this is true. How, after the letters of June 28 and July 13, that have been given above, showing that it was Father Symphorian himself that did and wrote all he now attributes to the Abbot-General who is dead, and to the Procurator-General—what, may I ask, is to be thought of the man who wrote all this with his own pen, got the new Abbot-General to sign it and then sent it to the Abbot of Mount Melleray, who knew so well the absolute and deliberate falsehood of every word it contained?

But in addition to the deliberate falsehood about the Abbot-General and the Procurator-General sending the sentence, and the order for my removal from the Monastery and for my incarceration elsewhere, Father Symphorian here makes himself appear to the new Abbot-General a perfectly independent and trustworthy witness, coming into the business now for the first time, and merely corroborating the late Abbot-General and the Procurator-General and, therefore, a witness that could have no earthly reason or motive for deceiving him; whereas it is only his own misdeeds that he is seeking to screen and his own false letters that he is attempting to corroborate. And in doing this he had now not only again borne false witness himself against me in a new character, but he has made the dead Abbot-General, the Procurator-General and the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation appear to bear the same false evidence. It is certainly only a man well trained and long practised in such intrigues that could have written this letter; and it is equally certain that he would never have dared to write it if he had suspected that we could ever expose its palpable falsehoods to the new Abbot-General.

II

BEFORE proceeding further I must point out also that in this letter Father Symphorian has not only given us clear and undeniable proofs of the falsehood and dishonesty of what he is writing, but that he also gives us here equally clear and undeniable proof of his prevarications in the whole business from the beginning.

Speaking for the new Abbot-General, he says:—"The Sacred Congregation has given an order, and our conscience imposes on us the obligation of executing it; moreover, we do not wish to incur the serious consequences of disobeying the order from the Sacred Congregation and the obligation of executing it"; and again he says: "You know it is conscience that makes us speak as we do; and that if the order we give you to-day is not promptly executed we shall be obliged to take action against you in spite of ourselves." Mark all this well, for here he proved beyond doubt, and in the strongest language he could command that if the Sacred Congregation had actually condemned me as Father Symphorian most positively asserted in his letter of June 28 that it had done, and as he again most positively re-asserts in this present letter; then, not even could the Abbot-General himself, who had all power and jurisdiction in the case, absolve the Abbot of Mount Melleray from the strict and unbending obligation of executing under the severest penalties the sentence against me—how much less could Father Symphorian have done it who had no power or jurisdiction in the world to do such things? But if this be so, where, then, on July 13 was the sentence against me? And where was that strict and unbending obligation of executing it under such severe penalties? And where, too, at that date was the order of the late Abbot-General commanding its immediate execution—where were they all when Father Symphorian wrote on that date to the Abbot of Mount Melleray that it was the Abbot himself that knew best what to do, and had the power and right to do it?

The only possible answer to this question is that there was neither sentence of the Sacred Congregation nor order, nor command of the late Abbot-General against me on July 13; for if there were, as we see from the present letter, neither Father Symphorian nor the Abbot-General nor anyone else, save the Congregation itself, could have given power as Father Symphorian did to the Abbot of Mount Melleray to do as he pleased.

But if these commands and orders did not exist on July 13 neither could they exist now on November 13, or at any other time; for such sentences and such orders do not come and go like the swallows, nor like pages at their masters' bidding; and the only time they could ever have come was on June 28.

If there had ever been any doubt about it this present letter in connexion with Father Symphorian's letter of July 13 to the Abbot of Mount Melleray proves clearly, that there never was and never could have been any condemnation of me by the Sacred Congregation nor any order from the late Abbot-General.

But in connexion with this letter, and proving the deep treachery of the whole business, there is another very important point that will have escaped the reader's notice, and would in all probability have escaped ours also; only that we were already warned of it by our secret agent in Rome. The point is this. While using so many threats and menaces, the new Abbot-General is very careful in this letter never to give the order for my removal and incarceration on his own personal responsibility. This keeps him safe. He merely reiterates what his predecessor, the late Abbot-General, Don Sebastian, has written and done, and which he says the Abbot of Mount Melleray knows all about; which, of course, as we have seen was nothing at all, for it was Father Symphorian who wrote and did the whole of it. And though over and over again we challenged the new Abbot-General to give the order in his own name and off his own bat, if there was any condemnation of me by the Sacred Congregation, yet he still refused to do anything but "reiterate" what his predecessor had written and done. So that if we wanted reparation or information on the subject it was to the dead Abbot-General in his grave that we must go, and leave Father Symphorian and the new Abbot-General, and the men in the General's Office in peace, to laugh at the deception they were playing on us in the dead Abbot-General's name.

But on the contrary, when the late Abbot-General was alive on July 13 and could bear testimony; and when the Abbot of Mount Melleray called upon Father Symphorian to produce his testimony on these subjects, Father Symphorian instead of getting the late Abbot-General's testimony, as seen in his own letter of that date, withdrew the alleged order of the late Abbot-General, and the pretended command of the Sacred Congregation for my removal and imprisonment, leaving the Abbot free to do as he pleased. But now when the late Abbot-General is in his grave, he does produce the new Abbot-General who knew nothing at all about the matter, living far away as he was at that time in his own monastery in France, to prove for him that the late Abbot-General did give the order and did testify to, and send the command from, the Sacred Congregation for my removal and imprisonment. And the new Abbot-General now testifies to this, in contradiction to the testimony of the Abbot of Mount Melleray and to Father Symphorian's letters. But how could the new Abbot-General prove a thing about which he knew absolutely nothing and could know nothing? Is not, then, the barefaced dishonesty and deception in both cases plain and palpable to anyone?

III

BUT all this was very far from exhausting the storehouse of Father Symphorian. He says that it was in July that the sentence of my condemnation and the order for my removal was sent by the late Abbot-General to the Abbot of Mount Melleray; and that there may be no doubt about it, he says that it was on July 28 and through the Procurator-General that it was sent. But have we not seen that it was not in July but on June 28 that the supposed sentence of condemnation and the alleged orders were sent; and, as I have said before, not by the Procurator-General at all but by Father Symphorian himself. Could anyone believe it if it were not there in black and white?

But were there any reasons for this change and falsification of dates? For surely he cannot be doing these things without a motive. Yes, there were reasons and most important ones. In the first place, this change of dates takes Father Symphorian and his letters of June 28 and July 13 completely out of the case, and conceals therefore all that he has done and written. In the next place, one of my strongest defences was that I was condemned unheard, undefended and without knowing that there was any charge against me until three weeks after my alleged condemnation; but this change of date would make it appear to the new Abbot-General that I had got them long before that condemnation and had every opportunity of defence, for Father Symphorian had sent them on July 13. Then again we have seen from the letter of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini written on August 21, and forwarded to Mount Melleray on that same date by the Procurator-General, how they tried to make it appear that I was duly condemned on July 18, all the technicalities, formalities and legalities of a fair trial being then, as they pretended, complied with. But alas for them! there was one weak point still in this little plot, and that weak point was a vital one. They made it appear that I was condemned on July 18 on the evidence of the Bishop of Waterford's report of his sworn enquiry. Father Symphorian proves this for us in his letter of December 13, 1904, which will be given immediately. Father Symphorian, however, had now on November 13 learned from us that the Bishop of Waterford had not forwarded his report to the Sacred Congregation until towards the end of July, no fixed date being given by us for we did not know it exactly—instead of having sent it before the 18th. Therefore, to fit in with this he now changes the date of my alleged condemnation once more from July 18 to 28. But once more alas! As the Bishop will himself testify in his letter of December 28, he did not write or send his report until July 31; so that it was again used for

my condemnation in Rome three days at least before it was written in Ireland; and, in fact, according to Father Symphorian's previous letters and his letter of December 13 I must have been condemned on the evidence of this report on June 25, six weeks before it was written; so that three times in all I was condemned in Rome on its authority before it was ever yet written in Ireland. Now did anyone ever before hear of such a letter as that? Surely these men in Rome have powerful and inventive pens when testifying in secret to such things. But the power of their pens is nothing compared to the alchemy of their ink; for after three times proving me guilty in secret in June and July, that same report of the Bishop so changed that when it was produced in public in May, 1905, it proved me absolutely and entirely innocent. What a change!

But still this was not enough. Father Symphorian had also to make it appear in this letter of November 13 that my condemnation was forwarded to the Abbot of Mount Melleray on July 28 through the Procurator-General, so as to keep himself altogether out of the business. Therefore, he changes the date of the Procurator-General's letter back from August 21 to July 28, so that the date would appear to be before the late Abbot-General's death. However, the great miracle of all comes in here, for the Procurator-General's letter and the letter from the Sacred Congregation that it contained were written, as we have seen, on August 21 and not on July 28; and the Abbot-General died on August 17, four days before the letters were written. So that he must have risen from the dead on August 21—there is no getting out of the fact—to give the order against me.

The spirits of the dead must, however, be very forgetful; for in the letter of the Procurator-General, written, as Father Symphorian tells us that it was, at the dictation of the late Abbot-General, and as we now see four days after his death, there is not one word about any order at all from the late Abbot-General, nor about any command to him from the Sacred Congregation to have me removed from Mount Melleray and incarcerated in another Monastery. Was there ever before seen such a heap of brazen falsehoods crammed into one short sentence? And all this is done for the sake of conscience and in the fulfilment of religious obligations. Could anyone imagine blacker or more unblushing hypocrisy?

But Father Symphorian has a remedy for all this; he is never without a remedy. He makes the new Abbot-General say:

"It is quite useless for Father Isidore to write to us to get the sentence changed. We can do nothing and we will have nothing more to do with it." And then until we too found a remedy he intercepts all our letters to the new Abbot-General; so that this letter of

November 13 which we have just given would appear to him to contain nothing but the most unvarnished and incontrovertible truths which nobody could contradict. For has Father Symphorian not written to the Abbot of Mount Melleray "You know" all this to be true, and that it cannot be contradicted? Has he not quoted the Procurator-General? And he does not contradict it either because he is quite ignorant of the whole thing or perhaps because he dare not. Has he not quoted and re-quoted the late Abbot-General? He is quite safe from contradiction there, too, for the late Abbot-General is in the grave. As convincing evidence of my guilt and conviction, has he not quoted the whole Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, as if all the Cardinals constituting that Tribunal bore testimony that I was found guilty by them and convicted and sentenced? And, of course, none of them contradict him because they know nothing about it and nobody dare tell them anything. And now I must never open my lips about this matter for that would be disobedience. And then my silence also will be the proof of proofs of my guilt and conviction. And to crown it all the new Abbot-General himself, who knew nothing about the matter, over his seal and his signature has testified to the truth of every word of this letter. Could Machiavelli have beaten this?

We have undoubtedly seen a vast amount of treacherous falsehood in the past, and unfortunately we are still destined to see plenty more of it as we proceed, but for the superabundance of naked untruthfulness that knows no shame this letter, I think, is the masterpiece.

CHAPTER V

I

TEN days after this shocking letter of November 13 there came another equally formidable one from the Procurator-General, making the same wild and unwarrantable menaces in the name of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. This letter, however, does not attempt to say that I was guilty or in any way proved to be so. It at least has that redeeming sense of shame about it. Here it is:

"ROME.

November 24, 1904.

"To the Abbot of Mount Melleray, Ireland.

"My Right Reverend Father,

"The Sacred Congregation has sent for me to speak to me about Father Isidore's case. It has received all Father Isidore has written

either to itself or to the Pope; and it has commanded me to assure you as follows:—Father Isidore ought to obey instantly the Sacred Congregation which in the month of June last commanded him to leave the Monastery and not to hear confessions except of men only. The Sacred Congregation has directed me to say to you that Father Isidore ought not to discuss the grounds and motives of its action against him but ought to obey as a child of obedience. These are its words. Besides the Sacred Congregation has begged of me to exhort you to make Father Isidore obey; the same Sacred Congregation having seen by some of the documents that you are backing up the father, there may happen to yourself what will prove to be very regrettable and very disagreeable to you. This is what the Sacred Congregation has charged me to communicate to you. I charitably warn you that the Sacred Congregation is very displeased with you.

“I remain, etc.,

“BR. BENEDICT CHAMBon,

“Porcurator-General.”

I must here mention that previous to this we had more than once written to the Pope: but there, too, our letters were intercepted. At last, however, quite unknown to the men in the General's Office and the Office of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, we succeeded through a friend in Rome in getting a letter forwarded in secret to His Holiness. This was high treason in the eyes of the intriguing officials of the Sacred Congregation and of the General's Office; for how could they continue to intercept letters and use others instead, thereby making many generous and bountiful friends for themselves, if we or anyone else could bring such things to the knowledge of the Pope? Hence the threats and menaces held over my head in this letter, and the abuse about my threatening to write to the Pope in Father Symphorian's letter of July 13; hence also the stern warning now that I must never attempt to question the acts or motives of the “Sacred Congregation.” We see here, too, how they threaten the Abbot for having assisted me in getting the truth before the Pope. And this threat was conveyed, as we learned subsequently, to every one in Rome who was suspected of having in any way conveyed any evidence in my favour to the Pope, or of having otherwise assisted us to obtain justice through His Holiness. They also bound on oath those who might be suspected of doing so in the future from ever attempting it. The letters of a Roman count will, later on, be produced to prove this, and the names of others who were threatened can be given.

Moreover, even after this, just as before, the officials at the Sacred

Congregation, who were co-operating with Father Symphorian, continued, though more cautiously, to intercept from the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation every one of the letters in my favour, as well as the whole mass of evidence that proved my innocence and the guilt of my accusers; so that as yet they were all of no earthly use to me, and never would have been until the day of judgment; only that our detective aided by a lawyer brought them to light before the real tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, and got some of the honest cardinals whom they knew in Rome summoned to attend the session before which the case was brought. Then they had to admit my innocence, acknowledge the interception of the letters, annul the pretended sentence against me, and in some measure make amends for the wrong they had done me; admitting also that the genuine evidence proving my innocence had been intercepted, and that falsified or forged evidence in the Bishop's name had been used instead. This anticipation is necessary in order that the reader may see more clearly what lies hidden behind the threats and menaces in these letters and the letters that follow.

II

Now this brings us to one of the thousand deceitful ways in which this sort of dishonest juggling is done at these Roman Congregations. It is done in this case with the word "Sacred Congregation" itself. This means sometimes, or rather is made to mean, "The Secretary only" or "The Prefect and Secretary" or perhaps some other subordinate official who has been employed; or it has its original and proper meaning, the tribunal or assembly of congregated cardinals.

Now when the jugglers in Rome want to deceive the outsider they use it in one sense and make him understand it in another. This is what Father Symphorian was doing the whole time, and what the Procurator-General does in this letter; they were calling the secretary or perhaps some other subordinate official "The Sacred Congregation," and then making it appear that it was the tribunal or assembly of the congregated cardinals that they were writing about. By this artful trick when dealing with a person in a remote country, these men in Rome can make the Sacred Congregation appear to the outsider who is unacquainted with its ways and working to do anything they like; and in the same breath make it appear in Rome that the Sacred Congregation has done nothing at all.

For instance, we wrote to the Pope that the Sacred Congregation had unjustly condemned me unheard and undefended, and without my ever knowing that there was any charge against me, and even

condemned me thus after my innocence had been most fully established.

But the men in Rome who had been doing all this themselves in secret, and quite unknown to the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, could reply to the Pope that I must be mad to imagine any such thing, for that the Sacred Congregation had never condemned me. And they could produce the records of that tribunal to prove that this was so. But that it was the Bishop at his sworn enquiry in January, 1904, that had found me guilty—and they had a forged report in the Bishop's name ready, as we shall see, in Rome to prove this; that, in consequence of this condemnation, the late Abbot-General had had to sentence me to be removed from Mount Melleray and to be punished, as seen in Father Symphorian's letter of June 28; and that they had nothing in the world to do with it save to express their opinion or willingness that the late Abbot-General might do this; seeing that the Bishop had found me so guilty. This was their version in Rome of the false story against me, while we could not produce the dead Abbot-General to disprove it, and they had the Bishop's forged report and Father Symphorian's false statement to corroborate it.

But while this was their version in Rome, at Mount Melleray it was still the Sacred Congregation itself that had found me so guilty and had condemned and sentenced me; Father Symphorian and the new Abbot-General falsely stating in their letter of November 13 that the terrible sentence must have been given against me by that tribunal after its being "well informed of my guilt."

Now it was Father Symphorian himself, as we have seen, and as he himself will have to admit in his letter of January 17, 1905, that interpolated in his French translation the sentence of condemnation against me into the letter of June 25, that had been signed by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. But then Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini as seen in their letter of August 21 not only condoned, but corroborated and confirmed all the wrong that Father Symphorian had done me by this false translation thus making it appear, as anyone can see, that it was the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation that had found me guilty and condemned me; so that they are quite as responsible for this piece of deception as even Father Symphorian himself. Here, then, we have the very same man giving two diametrically opposite and even contradictory versions; one version for the Pope and for Rome and the other for Mount Melleray and for us. Both of these versions or stories are not only false but destructive and subversive of one another. But as long as the true circumstances of the case are kept concealed by them, and

these contradictory versions are told in different places and to different persons who hear only one version, never suspecting that there is a contradictory one elsewhere, all this deceptive double-shuffling can go on quite safe from detection and exposure. This is plainly why the Procurator-General now writes to us in the same strain as Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General have done, namely, that the Sacred Congregation—that is, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini—has directed him to say that Father Isidore ought not to discuss or question the grounds or motives of their action, but ought to obey as a child of obedience. And he adds, "These are their words." So that when this plot, as we have seen it, is going on against me in Rome, my lips are now sealed as they think, and my hands tied not only by the Abbot-General and Father Symphorian, but also by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. But the deeper this plot now is, the greater will be the exposure of them all.

I must, however, mention here that my object is not to expose individuals, but the horrid system under which these things can be done, and are done, almost every day. I should have very much preferred indeed to have done it without introducing names, and I have tried to do so as much possible; but with regard to these men in Rome it cannot be avoided.

III

IN reply to the two letters of November 13 and 24 as given above, we wrote back to the Abbot-General and to Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini setting forth, as we have done above, all the palpable falsehoods and the manifest deceit of both the letters, accusing them, moreover, of intercepting the report of the Bishop's sworn enquiry and Abbot Eugene's reports of his many and searching investigations at Mount Melleray as well as the many other documents we had forwarded to them, all proving my innocence and the guilt of my accusers. We told them likewise that what they were now doing was only what the two men at Mount Melleray, who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well, always boasted that through money and influence they could get done by the officials of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. We stated, furthermore, in our letters that while we had the utmost respect and reverence for the Holy See and the authority of the Sacred Congregations as duly constituted, we could not in conscience pretend to entertain anything but abhorrence and contempt for the deceit that they were so clearly and so often shown to be guilty of, and for the corrupt practices they were so unblushingly and so perseveringly

carrying on under the cloak of religion and in the name of the Holy See—and brazenly carrying them on after they had all been so fully exposed and so superabundantly proved. To this we added that their empty threats and menaces had no terror in the world for us; because they dare not attempt to carry out even one of them until they proved me guilty of something—a thing which they had never done, and never could do, seeing that my innocence was established by so much and such overwhelming evidence.

To use a homely phrase, this brought their first cat out of the bag; and to continue the metaphor, we let out another cat which quickly caught and throttled their first and only one. Here is how it was effected.

“GENERAL’S OFFICE,

“ROME.

“*December 13, 1904.*

“Right Reverend Father,

“Our Abbot-General has received your letter, and has been much surprised at the malevolent spirit against Father Isidore, which you suppose to exist in the Fathers of the General’s Office. I have said to you, Right Reverend Father, that the General’s Office has not made any accusation to the Sacred Congregation against Father Isidore, and that on the contrary we would very much prefer never to have had anything to do with it. It is the Sacred Congregation that has sentenced him on the Bishop’s report of his Visitation and we had to transmit the sentence. We do not cast the stone at Father Isidore whom we do not know at all. We only reproach him with one thing, his disobedience to the Sacred Congregation. What do you want us to do in the matter? If Father Isidore is innocent let him write to the Bishop, and let him get the sentence of the Sacred Congregation changed by him. We are really fatigued of hearing about this affair, in which we have only acted as intermediaries and agents. Besides, we can do nothing for him with the Sacred Congregation, which has received the accusations from another source, and we have other things to do besides persecuting our brethren in religion.

“F. R. SYMPHORIAN,

“Secretary to the Abbot-General.”

In most respects this letter is only a somewhat milder re-hash of Father Symphorian’s false and oft-refuted statement by which he has been trying to exculpate or extricate himself ever since he was detected. It reveals, however, two very important facts. The first is that our letters had now got through to the new Abbot-General.

And then this compelled Father Symphorian to admit the second, a vitally important admission indeed, as will soon be seen, namely, that in Rome they were pretending that I had been condemned on the authority of an alleged report of his sworn enquiry of January 6, 1904, made by the Bishop of Waterford.

I now wrote to the Bishop enclosing from Father Symphorian's letter an extract of what regarded the Bishop himself, and sending afterwards a full copy of the letter. I then received the following reply, letting in a new flood of light on the whole business:

" BISHOP'S HOUSE,
" JOHN'S HILL,
" WATERFORD.

" *December 29, 1904.*

" My dear Father Isidore,

" The extract of the Secretary of the Abbot-General surprises me as much as you say the letter itself surprised you.

" Since January 6, last, the date of the investigation at Mount Melleray, I had no communication at all with the Holy See with regard to your case till the end of July, when you informed me that a decision had been given against you the month previous. Then I thought it would be well to put a report of my investigation before the Sacred Congregation. It was substantially the report that I had previously given to your Abbot, of which you are already informed; and with regard to the charge of violating the seal of Confession, I inserted a translation of the words on the same subject contained in my letter of January 10 to yourself. You will thus see the report of the Bishop as Visitor had nothing to do with the decision of the Sacred Congregation.

" In explanation of the fact that I did not send my report to Rome until July, I ought perhaps to mention that I held the investigation in discharge of my duty, and as exercising the rights of my position, as Bishop of the Diocese to examine all the charges made against a confessor of seculars, acting as such, whoever he might be.

" Yours faithfully,

" RICHARD A. SHEEHAN,

" Bishop of Waterford and Lismore."

These two letters, with the facts and circumstances revealed in the foregoing narrative of the case, leave no doubt now about the fact that Father Symphorian and Monsignor Guistini and Cardinal Ferrata used a forged letter purporting to be the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry, and that they pretended to condemn me on the

authority of it. Father Symphorian tells us that I was condemned by them on June 25 on the authority of the Bishop's report; but the Bishop tells us he neither wrote nor sent that report, and the facts clearly prove this. It must then of necessity have been forged; there is no escape from the dilemma. But who forged it? Unquestionably it was done between the General's Office and the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; in other words, Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and Father Symphorian were all three implicated in the work of forging the false report or at least of using it, knowing it to be false and forged.

If anyone could yet doubt this, the following fact proves it beyond yea or nay. The Bishop sent his genuine report to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on July 31, 1904, declaring me completely innocent of every charge my false accusers at Mount Melleray had brought against me; and he declared that he could do nothing else but find me completely innocent after the testimony of so many sworn witnesses proving me to be so. These are the words of the Bishop himself, of which I have still the sworn copy; and on May 10, 1905, the Sacred Congregation itself had to declare that this was the Bishop's decision as contained in his report of July 31, 1904. But when that report of the Bishop of July 31, declaring me to be proved completely innocent by such overwhelming evidence, reached the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, it was intercepted there by the officials, and the forged report pretending to find me guilty was still used against me. Then I knowing all this at once notified—both officially and personally—Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini that the genuine report of the Bishop was in their office. I also notified Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General and the Abbots of the General Chapter of it. But they still continued to intercept the genuine report proving me innocent, and to use their own forged one against me, pretending that the one which they had forged themselves, or got forged, to make me appear guilty was the only and genuine one. This surely proves their deliberate guilt up to the hilt if anything in the world could. But there are even stronger proofs of their guilt in the matter in other letters that follow.

This again leads us, as we have been so often led before, to the glaring deceit and hypocrisy of Father Symphorian, writing in this letter of December 13, as he had done before on July 13, to tell us to get the Bishop to write to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars to exculpate me if I am innocent; when at the same time he knew, as we now see, that his accomplices in the Office of that Congregation were intercepting every letter and every line in my favour

that went there, either from the Bishop or from any other source. As long as they could do this Father Symphorian could with perfect safety tell us as often as he pleased to get the Bishop to write exculpating me; showing thereby that he was exercising the utmost spirit of fair play to me. But no matter how often the Bishop might write to exculpate me, by intercepting his letter they could, and still did, use their own forged one that pretended in the Bishop's name to condemn me. And then they could show that there was no possible contradiction of that forged letter, for had I not been challenged by Father Symphorian to contradict it, and had I not got every opportunity to produce that contradiction from the Bishop if it were possible? What a terrible system of treachery and deception in such a case and under such circumstances! Turn to the right or turn to the left you find nothing but treachery. And when any of their deceptive stories are run down and the author caught as we have now—and many times before—caught Father Symphorian, the culprit and his associates are sure to have prepared and ready some other new and ingenious plan to shield themselves and enable them to escape. However, "long runs the fox but he is caught at last" is an old and supposed to be a very true proverb; so we, having now the Bishop's letter in our own hands, cannot fail to catch Father Symphorian and his confederates in the end. The chase, however, will be a pretty lively and exciting one.

But the Bishop's letter, too, demands here a passing word, for in more ways than one it also has its shady side. In the first place he tells us in it that he held his sworn enquiry at Mount Melleray as Bishop of the diocese. This is true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. It is very far, indeed, from it. He was holding it, moreover, for the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and as deputed by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to do so; as we already knew from Rome and as Father Symphorian's letter of May 11 following will prove for us. He was also holding it into the false charges that he himself had previously carried to Rome against me for the men at Mount Melleray, as we likewise knew already, and the rescindment by the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation on May 10, 1905, will also prove. This is the meaning of the careful but veiled distinction he makes about what he had done before and after the sworn enquiry on January 6. He was, therefore, doubly bound to make his report at once to the Sacred Congregation; yet until I compelled him to do so, almost seven months after his investigation, he never made any report to Rome of this enquiry which so completely exculpated and vindicated me; nor did he make any retraction whatever of the charges which he himself had carried to Rome against me; and this

he did, though he knew that the intriguers in Rome had condemned me under the false guise that he at his sworn enquiry had found me guilty.

And then when I did compel him on July 31 to make his report and his retraction to Rome, he made it through the Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, who he knew was intercepting all the evidence in my favour; whereas he should have done it through his own representative in Rome, the Rector of the Irish College there, who would at once have compelled them to set things right and do me justice.

Immediately after the above letter from the Bishop, there followed another from him marked " Private " to myself, in which he declared that at the sworn enquiry on January 6 he had found me innocent of all the charges brought against me; and that he could do nothing else after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so. But the history of this letter will be more appropriately given as we proceed.

The meaning of all this was that the Bishop, too, was now between the cleft stick, and his one aim and object was to extricate himself anyhow without incurring the rancorous enmity of the men in Rome, on whom in many ways he was so dependent. But to me the result was that the Bishop's report of July 31 proving my innocence, as well as these letters that were all so fair to the eye and the ear and so very important also as long as they were not forwarded through the proper channel, were still of no earthly use either to prove my innocence and vindicate my character in Rome. For everything, as we shall soon see, that was favourable to me was being still intercepted both at the General's Office and at the office of the Sacred Congregation. Nor to the Day of Judgment would all the evidence in the world in these circumstances have been of any use, as the Bishop well knew. Their only advantage was that in the end, through our secret agent, they enabled us to detect and convict the whole of them. But this was just what none of them could then foresee. All this, however, lets us see how many different ways there are in connexion with these Congregations of deceiving the simple and inexperienced outsider.

CHAPTER VI

I

WE have now come to the beginning of the year 1905, and I may say that from this time forward we could almost at any moment have brought forward the Bishop's genuine report of July 31, which thoroughly exculpated me, but which was all the time being inter-

cepted in the office of the Sacred Congregation; while the forged one showing me guilty was being still used there against me. There was, however, a good deal of danger as yet in moving too hastily in the matter, for it might very easily lead to the detection of our private agent, who was now watching them behind the screen; and besides this we desired to let them develop fully their dishonest schemes and plans in order that they might be the better and more fully exposed.

After the letter of November 13 we took the very necessary precaution of preventing Father Symphorian from being able any longer to intercept and prevent our letters from reaching the new Abbot-General, as we knew from that letter and from our secret agent that he had previously done with regard to all our correspondence that might expose any of the misdeeds of himself or his associates. And in order that the new Abbot-General might not be able to plead ignorance of any of the past facts of the case, we furthermore sent him copies of every letter that had come and was coming from Father Symphorian; pointing out at the same time their manifest falsehoods and contradictions. This was how we compelled Father Symphorian to reveal the fact that they were using in Rome the forged report of the Bishop. We now sent also to the new Abbot-General as well as to Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini not only copies of Father Symphorian's but also of the Bishop's letters proving that a false and forged report of his sworn enquiry had been concocted and used by them in Rome in order to make it appear that his sworn enquiry had found me guilty; whereas the Bishop's genuine report and his private letter to myself, that were both being intercepted in the office of the Sacred Congregation, proved my absolute and complete innocence and could do nothing else.

But at this period there occurred another very important incident which shows the unpardonable culpability now of the new Abbot-General and of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. Our letter to the Pope and the action taken by His Holiness compelled the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation to make some enquiries into the case, so that certain of the cardinals constituting the Tribunal discovered that there was no evidence in the world against me; for Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini dare not for the present use the false report that had been forged against me in the Bishop's name. The Tribunal, therefore, commanded the new Abbot-General through the Procurator-General either to produce proof of my culpability or otherwise withdraw at once whatever order they were pretending that there was against me. They tried to conceal all this at the General's Office under the pretence that the Procurator-

General did not sufficiently understand Italian to know what the commands given him meant. But a friend who was now secretly acting for us in Rome, and who can still be produced, informed the Abbot-General of it, so that there could be no possible excuse for him. This was on January 14, 1905, yet all this was again suppressed and their whole plot went on as if nothing had happened. So that henceforward the new Abbot-General must be bracketed along with the rest of them as being fully and knowingly responsible in the whole affair. This will be fully proved as we proceed.

II

Now in the light of all this the letters that follow are surely most astounding. But all the time that they were writing these letters, we gave them no inkling that we had full knowledge of the part they were playing, for we were now resolved to allow them to develop and expose for us the whole programme of their dishonest schemes. Here then is the first of these letters:

“ROME.

“*January 17, 1905.*

“To the Abbot of Mount Melleray.

“My Right Reverend Father,

“It is still on the subject of Father Isidore that I write to you, and I hope that this will be the last letter. In a letter to our Abbot-General Father Isidore accuses the General's Office of having caused him to be condemned by the Sacred Congregation.

“This absurd accusation would make us laugh if it did not fall on the whole order.

“I have related to you the facts. One day (in the month of May, I believe) our Abbot-General, Don Sebastian, was called to the Holy Office to answer accusations made against Father Isidore. His answer which I transmitted to the Holy Office, was this. Our Abbot-General, cannot condemn Father Isidore, whom he does not know at all. All that he knows is that the accusations were being repeated for a very long time; but the Right Reverend Abbot of Mount Melleray and the Right Reverend Visitor to the Monastery have always found Father Isidore innocent; and that we should be happy to see the denunciations stopped. About a month after this the Sacred Congregation transmitted to us the letter which I communicated to you on June 28, a letter in which it expresses its willingness (or consent) to have Father Isidore changed from the house, and to have the faculty of confessor taken from him.

"We believed that this willingness of the Sacred Congregation was an order, and we could not doubt it from the tone and manner in which it was communicated to our Father Procurator.

"If you believe it was not an order you are free (you and he) to interpret it so. Instead of addressing us let Father Isidore please address himself to the Sacred Congregation itself, because we are tired of fulfilling the role of agents at our own expense.

"Please say to him that it is useless for him to write more, and we will not occupy ourselves any more with his business. I only remark to you that the Sacred Congregation has not pronounced any suspension against Father Isidore. The poor father can accuse the General's Office, Father Symphorian, Father Louis and the General himself before the Sacred Congregation. His menaces do not frighten us. This only shows that his superiors and his brethren have to exercise much patience in his regard, since we, who have actually done nothing against him, see ourselves dragged before the justice-seat as abominable malefactors and infamous calumniators.

"(Signed) F. SYMPHORIAN,

"Secretary to the Abbot-General."

The reader will observe that there is not in this letter even one word about the Bishop's letter of December 28, that we had sent to Father Symphorian ten days before, and that proved so completely the impossibility of the Sacred Congregation having condemned me on the authority of the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry at Mount Melleray, as Father Symphorian had so positively declared in his last letter that it had done. He now dismissed that all-important subject, as if there had never been a word about it, and as if the Bishop's letter did not prove that the whole transaction at the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation must have been the result of fraud and forgery. He does not even acknowledge that he had received from us the Bishop's letters. This has always been his way. When caught and convicted, he turns from the past as if nothing had occurred, starting at the same time a new hare in order to draw us off in pursuit of it.

Here the more and the better to confuse the issue he turns to abuse and other irrelevant matters, just as he did in the letter of July 13 to the Abbot, after the Abbot had so clearly proved that it was Father Symphorian himself that had concocted the sentences of my condemnation by the two Congregations, and the order of the late Abbot-General for my removal, with the other terrible punishments, which, according to the letter of June 28, were to be inflicted on me without even the possibility of reprieve.

But how does he do this? For to expose their modes of operation is our main object now. He commences his letter with heaping on me a good share of ridicule, well sprinkled with abuse and contempt, and ends it with all the forcible abuse and defiance he can command; assuming throughout a lofty air of injured innocence and majesty. He even challenges me to accuse himself and his confrères and confederates at the General's Office before the Sacred Congregation, where he knows that he can get all my letters intercepted.

Then under cover of this ridicule and abuse he slips in as a passing matter of no consequence the humiliating admission he has now to make, namely, that I have never been found guilty or condemned by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; which in the circumstances means that he has forged it himself. He does it, however, in a manner that he thinks we can never expose; nor, indeed, could we do so only for his own letters and the letters signed by the Abbot-General and the Procurator-General.

Despite all the terrible things he has heretofore said, he is now compelled to admit that it was not a verdict of guilt, nor a sentence of condemnation by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, nor a formal order and command for my removal from Mount Melleray, nor a deprivation by the Sacred Congregation of my faculties as confessor, that was contained in the letter of June 25 from Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini; but only an opinion or a willingness on the part of these two officials, who we now see were his accomplices, that the late Abbot-General might do these things if he found me guilty.

But when Father Symphorian himself has most distinctly told us in his letter to myself of July 13, and even in this present letter, that the late Abbot-General could not possibly condemn me and never did condemn me, because I was always proved completely innocent and my accusers guilty. Where, then, could the condemnation come from or how could the late Abbot-General have done a thing he could not do, and which Father Symphorian's own letter of June 28 proves that he did not do?

Stripping the whole statement of the abuse and verbiage in which he has tried to cloud its meaning, this in plain words amounts to a full admission that he was himself on June 28, 1904, the hidden villain of the whole plot, concocting behind the curtains both the false sentence of the Sacred Congregation and the false order of the late Abbot-General. And it must be remembered that it is Father Symphorian himself who testifies to this; thus admitting that the whole thing has been done by himself.

But our object throughout has been not only to find out who was

doing these things, but also to discover how they were done. Let us then see how he changed this simple opinion of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini on an abstract question into such a terrible sentence against me. He again tells us this himself, and he thinks thereby that he is throwing a shield that can never be penetrated over all the evil he has done. He says that at the General's Office they took the opinion or the willingness to permit on the part of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to be a sentence of condemnation by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation on account of the "tone and manner" in which it was delivered. It is the "tone and manner" now that has condemned me; and tones and manner cannot be punished for the wrongs they do.

But why was the sentence and the penalties and all the rest put into the "tone and manner" instead of into the words of the sentence itself? Did anyone ever hear of a sentence being given in this way before? And then when he interpolated the terrible sentence of my condemnation in the French translation, though there was not a word of it in the original Italian, was he translating the "tone and manner" as well as the words of the sentence? Did anyone ever translate "tones and manner" that way before, and where did Father Symphorian learn how to do it? And where did he get the "tone and manner"? Well he tells us in this letter that he got them "from the way in which the sentence was communicated to our Procurator-General." But in his letter of June 28 we find that the sentence was not communicated to or through our "Procurator-General" at all, but through a letter to the late Abbot-General; so that once more the "tone and manner" even as well as everything else against me disappears; and the whole case ends in Father Symphorian's own deceit.

And now let us contrast this letter with what Father Symphorian has told us, for example, in the letters of June 28 and November 15, 1904, and we will find that he has here flatly and fully contradicted every single statement and every threat contained in these two letters. He tells us now that the Abbot and myself are still quite free to do as we please with regard to the wish or opinion or whatever it was that was expressed by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini in their letter of June 25; though he had previously represented it as such an overwhelming sentence of condemnation and such an imperative command that it sternly demanded, both from the Abbot and myself, the most prompt and unhesitating obedience, and demanded it under the severest penalties. Like most forsworn or prevaricating witnesses, it is only when we contrast item by item in this way what Father Symphorian now states, with what he has so falsely

asserted in his previous letters, that we can at all realize the multiplicity, the malice and the enormity of the false statements.

But there is another of these contradictory statements made in this letter which we cannot afford to pass over in silence; because it shows how from the very beginning Father Symphorian was carrying on this business under false pretences and false colours. He tells us now that it was by order of the late Abbot-General that he went to the Holy Office to answer the false charges against me. The late Abbot-General was now dead, and could not contradict this, just as he could not contradict his other false statement in the letter of November 13 about the late Abbot-General himself having sent the order for my removal from Mount Melleray through the Procurator-General four days after he was dead and buried. But as in that case also "*littera scripta manet*"; and Father Symphorian himself has contradicted it. He told us in his letter of July 13 to myself that it was by order of the Fathers of the definitory that he went. They were still alive and were now prepared to contradict this, for they had no power to send him and hence the change.

But the fact is that both of these versions are quite untrue. He went to the Holy Office under the false guise of being Procurator-General of the Order; for otherwise he would not have been admitted there at all in the case. This rule admits of no exception; and this too was the reason why Father Symphorian in the letter of November 13 sought to make it appear that the whole thing was done by the Procurator-General and not at all by himself. His guilt is also proved by a mandate issued on the subject by the Pope, immediately after Father Symphorian's conduct in this business was discovered and proved against him. And as is now likewise fully proved his object in going to the Holy Office under this false guise of being Procurator was to get the case sent to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, where himself and his accomplices in that office could secretly and securely manufacture their sentence against me while at the Holy Office they could not possibly do this, for at the Holy Office there would have to be a full and fair trial.

Now what makes all this, as well as the other shocking things we have already seen in the case so very important, is the fact that to the Day of Judgment we in Ireland could never have discovered what these men in Rome were so treacherously and dishonestly doing; nor even if we had discovered it could we ever have exposed it there, only that quite unknown to them the Abbot had so many friends in Rome who enabled us to get to the bottom of it. But as yet they had no knowledge at the General's Office that we had our secret agent watching all that was going on in Rome. Hence his

boast in this letter that they could afford to laugh at my complaints and threats of exposure, hence also his challenge to us to accuse them, if we dare, before the Sacred Congregation; where, as we shall soon see proved, he had his confederates intercepting every letter we sent.

III

I now wrote to the Abbot-General once more, sending him this letter of January 17, pointing out again how it completely proved that the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars had never condemned me, and proved also that it was Father Symphorian himself according to his own words that had falsely interpolated the condemnation and sentence into his French translation. The Abbot wrote likewise to him demanding as a right that the Abbot-General should put at once all the proofs of my innocence and of the wrong done me before the Sacred Congregation. This brought the Abbot-General to the test, so that we were able to see how unpardonable in every respect was his part also in the business, and to have clear proofs of it, too. The following is the Abbot-General's reply to myself:

“ROME.

“February 4, 1905.

“My dear Father,

“You are astoundingly mistaken if you expect to intimidate me by your letter. Right or wrong, you have been accused. The Sacred Congregation has judged you. My predecessor has caused the sentence to be transmitted to you. You do not believe that you should submit to that sentence. Now you say that you have been accused unjustly. Moreover, you pretend that it is the General's Office that has intrigued to obtain your condemnation. This is ridiculous and unjust.

“However that may be, it is not my business to make myself judge between you and your accusers, and still less between the Sacred Congregation and you. Neither is it for me to ask for a new enquiry for or against you. It is for you to have recourse to the Sacred Congregation. This is said once for all.

“H. AUGUSTIN MARRE,

“Abbot-General.”

All the hares that Father Symphorian had been starting to keep the sport going had now been run down, and he had no more fresh ones to let loose; so the Abbot-General takes up the game for him with the old and battered ones. He commences boldly, however,

in this letter by saying that I am astoundingly mistaken in thinking to intimidate him. But as will soon be seen it was himself that was making the big mistake, for we knew from Rome that more than a fortnight previous to this he had been ordered to withdraw the sham sentence of the Sacred Congregation and the false order in the name of the late Abbot-General; and at this very time if we had wished we could at any moment not only have intimidated him, but could have forced the Sacred Congregation to compel him to withdraw both the false sentence and the false order which he was still dishonestly pretending that his predecessor had given against me, as in reality we did very soon after.

But our object now was not to intimidate or compel him, but to find out how far he, too, was knowingly and deliberately co-operating with Father Symphorian and the officials of the Sacred Congregation in their evil work, and to have clear and definite proof of this, proof, I mean, that we could publicly produce. And this is precisely the proof that he abundantly supplies in the letter I have quoted, and supplies it far more abundantly still in the letter he sent shortly after to the Abbot of Mount Melleray, and which will be given also after I have concluded with this one to myself.

The special importance, however, of the present letter is its direct contradiction of what we have so recently seen in Father Symphorian's letter of January 17, for there we saw it clearly admitted that the Sacred Congregation never found me guilty and never condemned me; and, moreover, that the Abbot and myself were quite free to do as we chose in the matter. As so often before, this again shows the unblushing effrontery with which these men make their false and contradictory statements, when they think they cannot be exposed in Rome. No two statements could be more contradictory than that of Father Symphorian which we have just given, and this one now of the Abbot-General, and they were both coming from the same office.

But why have these two contradictory things been written by them from the same office and almost at the same time; and what is their object? It is the old game of double-shuffling over again, one thing at Mount Melleray and another in Rome; and they are trying to play it now in a more dishonest and deceptive manner than ever, if that, indeed, be possible.

According to this letter at Mount Melleray, I am still found guilty and condemned by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation—on what evidence no man knows; and they are fully convinced at the General's Office and even at the office of the Sacred Congregation that by no possible means can we ever make this fact known to the Tribunal

of the Sacred Congregation, for all our letters there are still being carefully intercepted by the officials. But while the Abbot-General is writing this to us at Mount Melleray, Father Symphorian and his accomplices in Rome, now including the Abbot-General himself, are certifying and testifying the very contrary there before the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, namely, that it has been notified to us that I have never been found guilty and never condemned in any way at all by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation. And suppressing the other letters himself and his confederates have written to the contrary, Father Symphorian can produce his letter of January 17 to prove that this is true.

But this does not mean that in Rome I am no longer represented there by Father Symphorian and his confederates as being found guilty and condemned and sentenced; as one would think that it surely did after Father Symphorian's letter of January 17. No, the secret version in Rome now as it has been ever since we exposed their conduct to the Pope—a version that I never would have heard a word of, only for our detective—is that it was the Bishop that found me guilty; and that in consequence of that verdict of guilt the late Abbot-General himself condemned and sentenced me to all the punishments that were to be inflicted on me according to Father Symphorian's letter of June 28; Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, as Prefect and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation, only expressing their mere opinion that the late Abbot-General could safely do this seeing that I was found so guilty by the Bishop at his sworn enquiry.

Suppressing every one of their own letters, of which, however, we were able to produce the originals contradicting every word of this false version; and suppressing also the dozens of overwhelming proofs, including the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry, which showed not only its falsehood and dishonesty but also its utter impossibility; Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini, the Abbot-General and Father Symphorian all combined were still using against me the false report that they had forged in the Bishop's name to make it appear that he found me guilty, and that, therefore, the dead Abbot-General had been obliged to condemn and sentence me. We knew all about this from our detective in Rome. But it is not the detective but the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation itself that will prove it for us on May 10.

Now comes the last letter before the rescindment. It is from the Abbot-General, and is perhaps the worst of all. I say "perhaps," because it is scarcely safe to use absolute superlatives where there is so much that is truly shocking. Its enormity, however, will be

realized when we have read the rescindment that immediately follows, showing that every word of it is most treacherously false. It is addressed to the Abbot of Mount Melleray.

“ROME.

“*March 15, 1905.*

“My Right Reverend Father,

“I wish to answer myself the letter which you have thought well to address to me regarding Father Isidore’s case. Before answering it I have communicated your letter to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. It would have been very pleasing to me if the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars had taken it into consideration. It is, indeed, very distressing to me to know that you are in such pain over the matter and also to find that you accuse third persons that have nothing to do with it.

I regret to have to tell you that the answer which has been verbally made to us is not favourable. It was an order “which was given to the most Reverend Don Sebastian, my predecessor, by the Sacred Congregation, and the Sacred Congregation will not revoke its decision unless proofs are given that Father Isidore is innocent of the accusations brought against him. The sentence was given with full knowledge of the case by the Sacred Congregation and the Sacred Congregation will not revoke the decision unless proofs are given that Father Isidore is innocent of the accusations brought against him.

“Then, the Sacred Congregation adds, neither the letter of the Bishop nor that of the Abbot, nor the affirmation of the Father contain these proofs. After this declaration it is necessary, my Right Reverend Father, for me to end there my intervention in the case.

“F. AUGUSTIN MARRE,

“Abbot-General.”

Here, in one shape or other, we have almost every one of Father Symphorian’s old and battered false stories over again. Fortunately, however, it is not necessary to refute and expose for the hundredth time the mass of utterly false and unpardonable statements that this letter contains. The following document proves the almost unimaginable falsehood of every one of them better than I or anyone else could do, were we to write about them even till doomsday. It puts, moreover, the stamp and brand of indelible infamy and falsehood on every word that has come from the General’s Office, and from the Office of the Sacred Congregation itself for the twelve months past.

"OFFICE OF THE CONGREGATION OF BISHOPS AND REGULARS.

"His Lordship, the Bishop of Waterford, in his letter of July 31, 1904, but presented to this Congregation only in this present month of May, states that after having made a formal inquisition and after having taken more accurate informations, it has resulted to him that all the accusations made against Father Isidore are false or unproven.

"In view of this fact this Sacred Congregation finds no difficulty in revoking whatever it may have decided in the hurried note of June 25, 1904, concerning the aforesaid father, as well with regard to his removal to another monastery as with regard to his faculties as confessor.

"This, Reverend Father, is made known to you that you may communicate it to the Abbot-General for his guidance and as a command.

"D. CARDINAL FERRATA, Prefect.

"PH. GUISTINI, Secretary.

"Rome, *May 10, 1905.*

"To the Procurator-General of the Reformed Cistercians."

IV

THIS was a full, a complete and an altogether overwhelming decision in my favour. It requires in this respect no lengthy comment. All along the line it thoroughly justifies my actions and vindicates my conduct, and in nothing more so than in my unbending opposition to the wrong and injustice done to me and to my reputation by the men in the General's Office, and by the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation in their schemes and plots to ruin my life and my character for ever. What, now, about my obligation of obeying them that we heard so much about in all the letters that came from Rome? It proves also to demonstration that I never was found guilty of anything in the world and, therefore, never could have been condemned either by the Sacred Congregation or the late Abbot-General or by anyone else. This is plain, because the Bishop's report, the sole and only thing on which they pretended to rely, proved just the opposite, that is, that I was found completely innocent of all and every one of the charges brought against me; and again there never was any trial, and without a trial none of them could either convict or condemn me.

But it must not be supposed for a moment, when I have proved that the Sacred Congregation did not find me guilty, did not condemn and sentence me, and never did give or could have given any command or order to have me removed from Mount Melleray and imprisoned elsewhere, with the faculties of confessor taken from me—it must not at all, I say, be supposed for a moment that I thereby

imply that the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary, when they acted in this business in the name of the Sacred Congregation, did not try their utmost to make it appear that the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation had done all these things. This was exactly what they did do and this was where their deceit and treachery lay.

Their guilt and culpability in the matter is proved beyond all question by their letter of August 21 and what followed after by the Procurator-General's letter of November 24, and above all by their deliberately using the Bishop's forged letter against me, while intercepting his genuine one that proved my complete innocence. The fact, then, of the unholy combination and of their guilty complicity and co-operation throughout, and at every turn and twist, with Father Symphorian and the General's Office is fully proved; and though they try to conceal it, this has had to be admitted by themselves in the recindment. What a revelation of the things that are done by these men in high places in Rome!

But what are we to think now of the Abbot-General's very last letter where he told us that he put the Bishop's report before the Sacred Congregation—a thing the Congregation now denies—and that the Congregation had declared that it did not prove my innocence; telling us in the same breath that "The Sacred Congregation had condemned me" with full knowledge of my case and, of course, of my guilt? What are we to think of all that he has done and written in the case, and of the tone of injured innocence on the part of his office that he assumed in the letters, for example, of November 13 and of February 4 to myself, and above all in his last letter to the Abbot? And what are we to think of the shocking letters of Father Symphorian and of the full accumulation of his almost unspeakable guilt and infamy through the whole business from beginning to end; for it is only in the search-light that this document of the Sacred Congregation throws back upon them all that we can see down into the almost unfathomable depths of their deceit and falsehood; and again it is only after reviewing and carefully calling to mind all the letters that we have read and their false and unblushing contents, that we can even half realize what a crushing and overwhelming condemnation of them all there is in this decision of the Sacred Congregation, which the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary had themselves to sign, and which the Abbot-General and his office had to transmit to us.

V

Now, to sum up, what makes this case, with the astounding facts and incidents revealed in connexion with it, one of unparalleled importance in connexion with the doings of these men in Rome, is the fact

that if left to my own resources, with all the documents and evidence and proofs of my innocence ready in my hands, I could no more have defended myself against this treacherous system that they were carrying on against me, nor have cleared my character and reputation from the terrible imputations and the infamy that they sought and thought to brand into it, than I could drive back the tide with a pitchfork. I should have been powerless for all time before them; only that, as often happens in the case of quiet, humble and holy men, the Abbot of Mount Melleray, contrary to their expectations, proved to be a man of invincible courage; and, as I have said, having many friends in Rome he was able to drag my opponents there into the light of day. But how many are there who, placed in circumstances like mine, have no Abbot Carthage of Mount Melleray to stand up for truth and right against such combinations, and thus obtain justice for the innocent in spite of them?

VI

THE rescindment given above, declaring me absolutely innocent of all the charges made against me, did not come to Mount Melleray until the end of May; for the General's Office kept it back until we notified them that we knew they had it in their office, and threatened them with public exposure if they kept it concealed any longer. When the Bishop of Waterford learned that the rescindment had arrived at Mount Melleray, he wrote to express his extreme gratification that justice had now been done me, and that at last my character was thoroughly vindicated. And when again approving of me as a confessor and giving me all the special faculties of his diocese, he wrote once more, "I, as Bishop of the Diocese, of course, fully approve of Father Isidore as a confessor of seculars, and I may say that it is with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction that I do so." For the wrong he had done me before his sworn enquiry on January 6, 1904, by carrying their false stories and calumnies to Rome, and after that enquiry by withholding his report of it thoroughly vindicating me for nearly seven months, while strictly and officially bound to forward it at once to the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, the Bishop now at least seemed most anxious to make full amends. But then it must be noticed that it was when I had the whole of them, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome, caught fast in the deadly trap they had laid for myself. I was, therefore, reappointed confessor in the public church, and in the guest house of the Monastery, as I had been before, and I continued so until Sunday, May 27, 1908, when I had to leave Mount Melleray, perhaps never more to see it.

MONASTIC POLITICS AND THE GENERAL CHAPTER

PART III

CHAPTER I

I

THE unrelenting vendetta that follows far surpasses anything we have yet seen. After their terrible exposure, contained in the rescindment we have just read, a searching Inquisition was secretly set on foot in Rome by the permanent officials of the Sacred Congregation, and by some of the cardinals and monsignors associated with them, to find out who it was in Rome and about the office of the Congregation that had assisted us in bringing their misdeeds to light. Every one in the least suspected of doing so was now threatened with the severest punishment, or with being hunted from the positions they held, if ever found attempting to do such things again. It was, therefore, plain that in Rome they were planning and preparing a new campaign in order to retrieve lost ground, and have revenge for the defeat and exposure they had suffered, and that these extraordinary precautions were being taken in order to secure themselves from being caught again. The men at Mount Melleray openly boasted of this, and of the fact that the General's Office and the officials of the Sacred Congregation were not going to allow themselves to be beaten by us. We were also informed and warned of it from Rome. But as yet we could have no certain knowledge of what form the new campaign was to take or where or when it was to commence.

II

That the Prefect and Secretary of the Congregation were meditating, this new attack, even when the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation compelled them to undo the wrong they had done me, is also quite manifest from the wording of the rescindment itself.

While the decision completely vindicating me and proving the guilt of my adversaries was given by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, its wording and drafting was exclusively in the hands of these two officials; and they make several false statements in it to shield themselves and their accomplices, and to keep the way open for their fresh campaign. For example, they state in that document

that the Bishop's report was not presented until the month of May, 1905, whereas it was in their own hands, and they knew the contents of it, for nine months before that date; while they were inflicting the most severe punishment on me under the pretence that this very report proved my guilt, they were actually using a forged document of their own to prove this, as we have seen from Father Symphorian's and the Bishop's letters. Again, they say in this rescindment that the Sacred Congregation revokes whatever it decided against me on June 25, 1904, as if it were the very same tribunal which was now rescinding the decision that had given it on June 25. This is a palpable *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*; for it was only Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini themselves who had secretly given on June 25 that hurried note, which was no decision whatever of the Sacred Congregation in order to enable Father Symphorian to carry out his designs against me, when the late Abbot-General and the Abbot of Mount Melleray were out of the way; then all the time screening and shielding him from detection by their co-operation and their deceptive statements. These two misstatements, therefore, are now manifestly inserted in the rescindment to screen their own proven guilt.

In the same fashion, to screen themselves and Father Symphorian and the new Abbot-General, they say vaguely in this rescindment that the Tribunal of the Congregation annuls "whatever it may have decided against me in its hurried note of June 25." But there was no decision at all against me in that hurried note, and there could be none. It was Father Symphorian himself that interpolated that false decision against me, as they had to admit, into his French translation of June 28. And then Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini in their own letter of August 21, and in the Procurator-General's letter of November 24, and the Abbot-General in every one of his letters, fully co-operated with Father Symphorian in that extraordinary piece of forgery. The wording, therefore, of this rescindment is in every respect just as bad as anything we have seen in the past, only that their sting is now drawn, or at least deadened for the present.

Then they say in this document that the accusations against me were merely "unproven." But according to the Bishop's report and the other overwhelming evidence before the Tribunal and according to the Tribunal itself, the charges were not merely "unproven," they were positively proved and declared to be "false and malicious," as the rescindment shows, and it was proved also that the men making them were guilty of the things with which they charged me. This statement, therefore, is another falsehood. And this word "unproven" instead of "proved to be false and malicious"—

as the Tribunal had decided and the facts show—is inserted, because they had already on foot a new plot to suppress once more all the evidence in my favour, and then, without allowing me any possible opportunity of rebutting it, use against me in the same secrecy as on June 25, 1904, all the evidence that was so often proved and declared to be so “false and malicious.” To the last item this will be proved against them in what follows. In fact all that follows under its varying phases will be found to be one continuous proof of it, and a full and complete exposure of their endeavours to effect it.

But there comes now from the General’s Office and from Father Symphorian himself a most extraordinary piece of evidence that fully manifests the plot they were hatching for this purpose and how they meant to carry it out. This evidence is so astounding and shows so clearly their motives in the matter that it demands special attention, particularly as it may be said to be the climax of the whole business up to this, as well as a clear indication of what is to follow.

III

IN the first days of May, 1905, almost a month before the rescindment reached us, we got a telegram from Rome telling us that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had been again compelled to rescind whatever it was they had done against me on June 25 previous, and that they had also been compelled to command the Abbot-General to forward that rescindment to us at once and without fail. Three days after, through another communication from Rome, we learned that the General’s Office, with the connivance of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, was trying once more to hush this fresh decision in my favour as they had done the January previous. This second communication informed us that this new and full rescindment had already been verbally communicated to the Abbot-General through the Procurator-General, and that it was to be given in writing also, with a peremptory order to have it carried out immediately; but that unless we took prompt action we should probably hear nothing about it until the General Chapter of the French Abbots in September, when they were sure to have a new plot fully matured to strike me down; thus causing me to step out of one of their snares into another, for that in Rome they were resolved on vengeance. Then the Abbot of Mount Melleray telegraphed to the Abbot-General saying that I knew all that was going on and had gone on between the Sacred Congregation and the General’s Office; that I was also aware of the decision that was given in my favour the January previous by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, but

suppressed by the General's Office, and even by the General himself; that I knew they were attempting to do the same again; and that I, therefore, threatened to go out and expose all this to the world if he and his officials continued to act as they were doing. The following letter then came:

“GENERAL'S OFFICE,

“ROME.

“May 11, 1905.

“To the Lord Abbot of Mount Melleray.

“My Right Reverend Father,

“Our General has received the two telegrams you have addressed to Rome and to Igny. If he has not answered, by telegram, it is, first, because he had your dispatch a little late at the time he was making the Visitation at Mount Olives; and, again, because it was difficult to give you a decisive and precise answer. You have not forgotten, my Right Reverend Father, that Father Isidore was denounced to the Holy Office and condemned; that our Father General hastened to transmit to you this decision of the Sacred Congregation, that Father Isidore has not consented to submit to the wish of the Sacred Congregation, but contents himself with accusing the General's Office without saying anything for his own justification. The matter rests entirely in the hands of the Sacred Congregation. And that is why we have always said to Father Isidore, write directly to the Sacred Congregation and leave us in peace.

“Our General cannot hold an enquiry after the Bishop has made one ‘by order of the Sacred Congregation.’ If this Sacred Congregation wished for a counter enquiry it ought to declare so itself. Our Father will not act by himself or by a delegate, but in so far as he receives the order to do so in writing from the Sacred Congregation. Up to the present he has not received this official mandate and he cannot intervene.

“I remain, etc.,

“F. SYMPHORIAN,

“Secretary of the Abbot-General.”

When Father Symphorian was writing this letter he had already received the written rescindment, as given above, showing that all the accusations against me were proved by the Bishop's report to be absolutely false. Yet he still re-asserts that I am condemned on the authority of the Bishop's enquiry, and that “I have said nothing for my own justification.”

That he had the letter of rescindment and its contents before his

eyes when he wrote this is plain, for the rescindment was received by him on May 10, as the reader can see, and the letter was written on the 11th, the day after. Besides, he had known many days previous that the sentence against me was nullified and rescinded, as we even knew at Mount Melleray. What, then, could be more contradictory than these facts and Father Symphorian's statement? Indeed, if there were not another document or proof in the world to convict them this one alone would condemn for ever the conduct of Father Symphorian and of the General's Office. Its audacious falsehoods would stagger credibility if we had not the originals.

But does this letter not prove also that, only for the salutary fear which the Abbot's telegram struck into their hearts, they intended to suppress again this second decision in my favour, as they had done the January previous? And does it not prove out of his own words that Father Symphorian and his accomplices had intercepted and suppressed all the proofs of my innocence that we had sent them? What else could he mean by saying that as yet I had said nothing for my justification after all the proofs of my vindication and justification we had sent them, and even after the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation had declared that all the accusations brought against me were proved to be false.

This letter is surely an astounding one. It is wonderful how much it proves for us. It proves, for example, that the Bishop had held his sworn enquiry on January 6, 1904, for the Sacred Congregation. We had known this all along, but could not have proved it categorically without this letter. He states it here in plain words, and the Bishop had then to admit it. But what is most important of all, it shows that the rescindment by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation of the sentence against me, and my complete vindication and justification therein contained, was once more being rigorously suppressed and that I must commence all over again to prove my case. While without the rescindment, which we see they were endeavouring to suppress, and with the new secret machinery they had already at work in Rome, this would, of course, have been an utter impossibility. Such we see is now the new plot, the groundwork of which we saw in the wording of the rescindment by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. And how they sought to work out the plot will be more astounding still than anything we have yet come across.

Father Symphorian adds, moreover, that I have satisfied myself with accusing the General's Office. Aye, there's the rub, there's my crime; and worst crime of all! I have not only accused them but I have proved their guilt, and the guilt of their accomplices in the

office of the Sacred Congregation. Assuredly in the eyes of these officials in Rome, that must be the sin that knows no pardon. Father Symphorian then gives us here the key that unlocks all their motives. And this will enable us to understand, when we come to it three months after, the vindictive action of the General Chapter in France, and to understand also much more that follows.

IV

DURING the eleven months that elapsed from the beginning of July, 1904, when my alleged condemnation reached the Monastery branding me with unutterable infamy, down to the beginning of June, 1905, when my thorough and complete vindication came, I had suffered a mental torture not less heart-crushing than if I had been lying under sentence of death, for the blackest crimes on record. Yet the complete vindication of my character and the consoling thought that I had done and suffered something to put an end to such a system of cruel despotism, more than recompensed me a hundredfold.

But who could believe it? Three months after my complete vindication, and after the astounding exposures we have seen, I was again, without any notice whatever, condemned unheard and undefended; without a single charge being brought against me, and without a single witness or a tittle of evidence of any kind being produced. In fact, I knew nothing about my condemnation until four months after it had taken place.

This time it was by the General Chapter of the French Abbots, held at Citeaux in France in the beginning of September, 1905, that I was thus condemned. The leader in this new attack was Father Symphorian's Abbot, John Baptist of the Monastery of Sept-Fons in France. The Abbot of Mount Melleray was present at part of the proceedings; but not being well able to speak French, the language in which the business was carried on, and being, moreover, excluded from the most important part of the conference he could do nothing for me. The sentence now passed was that I was to be banished from Mount Melleray and sent into perpetual exile and imprisonment. This was the same old sentence over again, only that it imputed no guilt.

The extraordinary procedure in the case was truly astounding. Without any charge or accusation being brought against me, without any trial at all or even pretence of trial, and without any evidence or proof whatever, these French Abbots who knew no more than the man in the moon about the facts, found me "guilty of disturbing the

peace of the Monastery." But Father Symphorian's Abbot, John Baptist Chautard, as leader and legal adviser to the other Abbots—for he was an old French Avocat who had joined the Order—pointed out that this verdict might require some proofs that they could not obtain; whereas the verdict should be "that I was the occasion why the peace of the Monastery was disturbed and could not be restored," as this form of verdict would require no evidence of wrong doing on my part; and that consequently I could make no defence and would have no right to make any. This amended form of verdict was, therefore, agreed upon by all.

This procedure, ridiculous as it was, had not even the merit of originality, for if we go back to the letter of Abbot Eugene to the late Abbot-General on June 12, 1901, we shall see there that this is the very thing that one of the fathers boasted he could get done through influence, and that it was the very thing also that Father Symphorian, in his letter of July 13, 1904, to the Abbot of Mount Melleray, wanted to get done in order to shield and cloak his own doings as we have now seen them. It is, in fact, one of the old rusty weapons they refurbish occasionally, when they want to strike somebody down in order to screen their own guilt. But it is a false and treacherous weapon that they have no right in either law or equity to use; there is in fact in it no more law or justice than in the highwayman's blunderbuss.

This was not all. From their past experience in the case, and the action we had taken, they knew that they could not well execute such a sentence without some pretence of a trial. They, therefore, decided to appoint Father Symphorian's Abbot, the old an experienced lawyer, John Baptist Chautard, "Extraordinary Inquisitor," to go to Mount Melleray and obtain "proofs of the charges" against me, though as yet there were no charges whatever. They first find me guilty and then sentence me, and now they are going to invent charges against me, and then make a pretence of condemning me on the strength of them, after going through the mere formalities of a mock trial!

They furthermore decided that the sentence they had passed was not to be executed against me until their Inquisitor, Abbot John Baptist, had invented the charges and obtained his pretended proofs of them, and until they had reassembled twelve months after. Why, then, was the extraordinary sentence passed without there being as yet any charge or evidence against me? And why was it passed before the trials, particularly when they were not going to execute it for twelve months? This was surely most absurd and ridiculous as well as illegal and unjust.

But it was not done without design and without plenty of motives. First, when I was condemned and sentenced, I could make no charge against my convicted calumniators at Mount Melleray; nor could I expose their guilty confederates in the General's Office, Father Symphorian and the Procurator-General, both of whom the General Chapter now restored to their respective positions, from which they had been compelled to resign after their conviction in the case the May previous. Being convicted in the eyes of the law, as they now represented me to be, such charges and complaints on my part would be regarded as groundless and vindictive recriminations, and, therefore, at once rejected at Rome and thrown aside. This is the strict rule of the Roman Congregation; so that my conviction, absurd and illegal though it was, now shielded them all.

The second reason why the sentence was given in advance was that it enabled Abbot John Baptist, when he came to hold the sham enquiry at Mount Melleray, to represent me to the community as a convicted and condemned criminal, which, of course, he did. It also enabled him to insinuate to the community that there must be some extraordinary crime, for which I was thus convicted and condemned; whereas he knew there was nothing in the world against me. But, above all, when I or anyone for me attempted at the enquiry that followed to give or produce any evidence in my favour, this astounding conviction against me enabled him and his secretary to stop all evidence in my favour, saying that the case was already decided by the General Chapter, and that as I had been already tried, found guilty and condemned, it was now too late to give any evidence for me, and that they could accept none. I was convicted at the General Chapter because they were to get evidence against me at Mount Melleray: and then no evidence in my favour was to be admitted at Mount Melleray because I was already convicted at the General Chapter. This is so extravagant, that comment on it would be thrown away, but in reality it is only under a new guise what they had been doing throughout in Rome.

V

It may now be asked, why did the French Abbots act in this way? There were indeed many reasons. In the first place they knew nothing about the case except what Father Symphorian, the Abbot-General and the other members of the General's Office in Rome told them; and after what we have seen we can well guess what this was. It will, for instance, be remembered how the year before, in September, 1904, Father Symphorian intercepted my letter to these Abbots in

the General Chapter, and put before them an absolutely false statement of my case and of the Bishop's letter which they had forged in Rome. Besides this, if we revert once more to Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901, and see what he says about denunciations to Rome of himself and the Abbot of Aigue-belle, we can understand how these Abbots themselves were absolutely at the mercy of this ring in Rome, that was manipulating the power and authority of the Holy See for their own personal purposes. So that in this business they dare not at their peril oppose the designs of the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation. In other words, the Abbot-General, Father Symphorian and the other members of the General's Office in Rome were now out for their revenge on account of the manner in which I had exposed them the May previous, and the Abbots of the General Chapter dare not refuse them that revenge. But it must be confessed that there was even a more unworthy motive than any of these actuating most of the French Abbots. They wanted to get the wealthy Monastery of New Melleray in America from the Irish for themselves and for the monks of their own nationality, and it was only on condition of helping to crush me first, and the Abbot of Mount Melleray afterwards, that they could hope to effect this.

But there was worse still to come. Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, both of whom I had convicted the May previous of intercepting, as we have seen, the Bishop's report and the many other proofs of my innocence, and of using instead against me the Bishop's forged letter, now appointed Abbot John Baptist, Apostolic Inquisitor, with unlimited powers from the Holy See, as he said himself, to do what he pleased. I was now at the absolute mercy of these men whom I had convicted of acting so falsely; and there could be no doubt that all this was being done to punish and make an example of me for having exposed their guilt by pretending now to find me guilty of the things of which I had so often and so overwhelmingly been proved to be innocent. This was the very worst form of Italian vendetta, clothed in the garb of legality and religion. But it was only what one might have expected from them after what we have seen. It was only the opening of the new campaign we saw them planning at the very time they were convicted.

CHAPTER II

I

THOUGH the scene is again changed, it is still the same campaign; and the inquisition or enquiry, or whatever we may call it, which follows at Mount Melleray is immeasurably worse than anything we have yet witnessed in the case. Under a new guise and a new name, it was in the first place an artful continuation of the old tactics of suppressing the proved truth, and of manufacturing and using instead false and fully refuted evidence, as we saw it practised by the men in Rome before their exposure and conviction in May, 1905. This part of the subject, most interesting and important though it be, cannot, however, be fully dealt with until we come to the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908, when far stranger things than any we have yet seen, will be laid bare and proved.

But what first claims our attention, and what rendered these proceedings at Mount Melleray a thing of unparalleled wrong, was the means so openly employed and the artifices so glaringly resorted to by Abbot John and his secretary or interpreter, in order to enable them to whitewash the conduct of the French Abbots of the General Chapter, and the men in Rome; and to carry through for them to a successful issue their new and bitter campaign of revenge. In this, indeed, Abbot John displayed a degree of inventive but quite transparent perversity, and a very peculiar French blend of sordid meanness and pompous effrontery which was absolutely without shame or scruple and altogether absurd and ridiculous. But the facts are such that they alone can speak for themselves, at least as far as Abbot John will permit them to do so. For, as we shall soon see, one of his chief endeavours was to have his whole proceedings buried in silence and secrecy, almost as impenetrable and perpetual as the tomb.

To start with, then, on January 6, 1906, Abbot John and his Secretary arrived at Mount Melleray to make his pretended Inquisition for the French Abbots, and for Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. We never knew until two years after this that he was the Abbot of Father Symphorian, the man who had done me so much wrong; nor until the moment I heard it from himself, when addressing the community at the opening of the proceedings, did I know anything of my strange condemnation by the French Abbots of the General Chapter, nor that anyone was appointed there to hold any enquiry whatever into the case. Nor had I ever heard that he was appointed by the Cardinal Prefect Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini

the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation to hold an Inquisition for themselves. The whole thing came on me as a sudden surprise, and without warning or notice, so that I had not one second even for preparation. The Abbot had been strictly bound at the General Chapter not to let me know anything about what had occurred there.

The Abbot even knew nothing of the fact that he was then coming; on the contrary, he had written to the Abbot that he would not come until later on. Moreover, until after his arrival, the Abbot of Mount Melleray was never informed that Abbot John had been appointed by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to hold any Inquisition for themselves.

At the trials in Rome in 1907 he testified to this, producing also a letter to prove that he was kept in the dark. In consequence of this the Abbot, like myself, was left without either time or opportunity for preparation. But those who were opposed to us had at least two months for preparing their attacks, having had secret information of it all from the General's Office in Rome. At the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908, several witnesses proved this also. Of itself this showed that the so-called Inquisition in its inception was nothing but a deliberate fraud and sham that was meant only to deceive; proving also that the Inquisitor and the men in Rome were leagued with the convicted calumniators at Mount Melleray; otherwise why were they fully informed about the Inquisition that was to be held, and why did they get full time to prepare for it, while we who were mainly concerned, and had the right to know, were kept in complete darkness and without a moment to prepare?

II

THIS, however, was only the beginning. At the very opening of the proceedings the following prohibition was issued by the Inquisitor and published to the community by his Secretary:

"PROHIBITION

"I impose from this moment, in the name of the Holy See and in virtue of Holy Obedience, the most absolute secrecy about whatever refers to the fact now past, and relative to divers confessors of the House. All understand to what circumstances I refer. Thus, then, no member of the community can either speak of these things or write of them, or make known anything about them 'in foro externo,' either now or later on to anyone in the community or to anyone from outside, save to the Holy See alone, and without having consulted about it with anyone else.

"(Signed) JOHN BAPTIST CHAUTARD."

As already seen, I had not got a moment to prepare any defence, and this prohibition would now most effectually prevent me from ever being able to do so or to prove anything either now or hereafter. For how could I ever obtain evidence or prove anything if I could neither speak to nor communicate with anyone on the subject? This from the start made the Inquisition an utter sham and fraud.

As the enquiry proceeded the Inquisitor, finding that the greater part of the community understood his motives and appreciated to the full the great injustice he was doing me, added to the above prohibition as follows:

"The same secrecy, accompanied by the same conditions and exceptions, is hereby imposed concerning whatever may be said or done by no matter what religious or by the Visitor or his Secretary in the course of this Visitation. Thus no member of this community shall be free to reply to any question relative to this matter.

"(Signed) JOHN B. CHAUTARD."

The Inquisitor and the Secretary could now say or do whatever they pleased without the least danger of being exposed, for this is in reality the meaning of the new addition to the original prohibition.

It must also be kept in mind that both of them were the agents and instruments not only of the French Abbots of the General Chapter, who had already so scandalously condemned and sentenced me without charge, evidence or trial; but also of the men in Rome who had been, as we have seen, so recently convicted, and who were now wanting their revenge. It must, too, be remembered that both the Inquisitor and the secretary were obscure Frenchmen quite unknown to us, whom we could not hold responsible for anything no matter what they did; whereas if there was to be any Inquisition at all, it was the Abbot-General, who was responsible and who would have to stand by his acts and defend them, that was bound to hold it. It was like employing the unknown and irresponsible bully to do the bludgeoning. But what all this means will be better understood when we have seen their outrageous conduct in the course of the proceedings, and how, when they had done their work and when detection and exposure came, we could nowhere find or at least reach them. Their whole scheme and their plans for carrying it out were thus carefully hedged round in order to make, as they thought, detection and exposure of their conduct quite impossible for us.

III

AFTER giving the first prohibition the Inquisitor immediately announced that I was tried, judged and condemned by the Abbots of the General Chapter; and he announced it in terms that conveyed to those present that I was also under the condemnation of the Holy See and the Sacred Congregation, particularly by declaring that the General Chapter and the Sacred Congregation had commissioned him to have the terms and conditions of my sentence fully complied with in order that it might be carried out in its entirety against me. So forcibly did he do this, and with so many repetitions in various forms—all implying my guilt and conviction by the Sacred Congregation as well as by the General Chapter—that many of those present thought I would have to leave the Monastery instantly, and that the rescindment of the sentence against me given on May 10, 1905, must only have been a fraudulent concoction of the Abbot and myself. And while he was doing this neither I nor the Abbot nor anyone for me would be permitted to speak one word of denial or protest, or to make any representation whatever against all this false and outrageous language and conduct. Nor was there now any means whatever of making the truth known to the community; for by the prohibitions the lips even of the Abbot as well as my own were for ever sealed on the subject.

Eight or ten members of the community, all priests except one, sent most vehement protests to the Sacred Congregation against this conduct of the Inquisitor, and against his deliberate falsehoods. But, of course, that was useless, as everything sent there was now intercepted, just as it had been before the rescindment in May, 1905. These members, however, at the trials in 1907 testified to the fact that they had done so, and that nothing had resulted from it, thus showing that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini were at their old work of intercepting the letters. This, of course, was why in the prohibition the Inquisitor permitted us to write to the Sacred Congregation and nowhere else, so that every new development of the facts affords fresh proof of the wrong and injustice they were doing, and of the deceit of the enquiry.

The Inquisitor next announced that he had come to the Monastery to get together "all the proofs of the charges against me" and that nothing else would be permitted. He made it perfectly clear that, as I was already tried and condemned, no evidence whatever in my favour could now be received. I was condemned by the French Abbots of the General Chapter without there being any trial, or any charge or evidence against me, because Abbot John was to invent the

charges and get the evidence at this enquiry. And now no evidence for my defence was to be permitted because I was already judged and condemned by the French Abbots. Surely this was a vicious circle which included within its orbit nothing but fraud and deceit. At the same time, as we shall see, shielded as he thought by the prohibitions, Abbot John, in Rome particularly, sought to make it appear that I had got every opportunity that could be desired of defending myself but could not.

He persistently refused to accept any evidence or to allow any witness to testify anything in my favour, saying when the witnesses offered to do so that my case was finished or that I was already tried and condemned. Four witnesses have proved to these words on oath, and that evidence is still in the archives of the Sacred Congregation. But several others have proved to his absolutely refusing to accept any evidence that was favourable to me. While others again, Father T. and Brother B., for instance, compelled him, sorely against his will, to accept their evidence proving my innocence; because this evidence grew out of an attempt on his part to make them give false testimony against me. There were other witnesses who, for various reasons, did the same. But then the Inquisitor and his Secretary suppressed every word of this evidence that favoured me until they were afterwards, at the General Chapter in France and in Rome, compelled to admit it. So that we have not only his words but his acts also to show that he refused to accept any evidence in my favour.

We have spoken about the prohibitions in a general way; but a few words more regarding them in the particular and in detail must be promised, as their effects run through the whole business; showing the treachery he was practising under cover of them. These prohibitions, as far as they regarded communications between members of the community, were given in public as if they bound all. But in reality they were only intended to prevent me from being able to get any evidence either then or afterwards; for it was at once communicated to those opposed to me that they were free to hold such communications as were necessary, in order to prepare more fully their case and their evidence. The prohibitions then became a means not only of enabling my adversaries to give any evidence they chose against me, but of giving it without any danger of ever being detected or contradicted. For how could I ever refute or disprove any of this evidence, that he was labouring so dishonestly, so secretly, as so industriously, to heap up against me by these unjust means, if I could neither speak to, write to nor in any way whatever communicate with anybody on the subject?

But this was not the worst that was being done. Under safe cover

of the prohibitions the Inquisitor and his Secretary were actually forcing every witness they could influence to give false evidence and to suppress the truth. This will be proved when we come to the trials in Rome. It was when he found that he was discovered doing so that he added to the first prohibition the amendment regarding the conduct of himself and his Secretary, in order to prevent the possibility of their ever being detected and exposed.

Here, for example, was one of the ways by which he was endeavouring to manufacture proofs against me, and to suppress the truth. He had all the evidence we had sent to the General Chapter, to the General's Office, and to the Sacred Congregation. He knew from it that those opposed to me had employed the women and girls at the lodge, the college, the shop and at the ladies' lodging house, as well as the students at the college and many others besides, to spread, as seen in the earlier chapters, the calumnies and slanders against me; and then that their agents, as we have also seen, had carried all these calumnies and slanders into the Monastery. He knew from our overwhelming evidence and particularly from Abbot Eugene's report, which has been so often quoted, the proved falsehood and groundlessness of every one of these slanderous stories, and knew that it was my accusers who were guilty of the things with which they accused me. But now he was endeavouring to force the brethren, particularly those he thought more ignorant and inexperienced to testify that they had heard these things about Father Isidore, and that they had heard them both inside the community and outside, and from many and different persons. And then he refused to allow any of them or anyone else to testify that they knew that these things were false and groundless concoctions and already often proved to be so.

He said, when they came to this part of the evidence that justified me, that this was not the sort of evidence the Congregation in Rome and the General Chapter required, and he refused to accept even one word of it. Afterwards, as we shall see, he had to admit himself that he refused the evidence of my innocence; pretending, of course, that it was only a slight mistake he had made; just as the men in Rome pretended in May, 1905, that it was merely by mistake they had used against me the forged report of the Bishop instead of the genuine one that proved my innocence.

Here is one of dozens of examples of how the Inquisitor was doing what I have described, and persevered in it even after being detected; for he imagined that he could safely rely on being shielded by his powerful supporters in Rome. He had one of the brothers, who had been employed at the lodge, amassing for him a regular volume of

this sort of false evidence. But I had known all about this case long before, and knew what the brother was now doing for the Inquisitor; because the person that the brother had employed in the business—the girl, as already described, who had repented of what she had done—had turned informer and had written to the Abbot declaring that the brother had compelled her to write and sign “this foul and lying stuff,” as she herself called it, which she knew to be so at the time; declaring also that she knew I was perfectly innocent of what she had been forced by the brother to charge me with. She retracted it all and expressed her heartfelt sorrow and repentance for what she had so wrongfully done. All this had long ago been proved and admitted before the General Chapter and in Rome. But now they were again secretly massing all this “evidence” against me, and I was never to know anything about it.

I, however, asked the Inquisitor if the brother had not given him a letter from this girl making these charges against me. The Inquisitor flatly denied it, adding that the brother’s evidence was all most favourable to me. When he made this statement I at once produced the girl’s letter of retraction to the Abbot and her exposure of the brother’s wrongdoings. The Inquisitor had then to admit that the brother had produced her retracted letter in evidence against me, but said that after this exposure he would burn it, and burn also every paper and every line he had got from him and that he would treat all this brother’s evidence as false and burn it likewise.

This, however, was only another artifice to prevent a further exposure of this false evidence. As will be seen, it was the girl’s retraction of the false charges that he destroyed or suppressed, then putting as genuine evidence against me the brother’s false evidence together with the document the girl had been compelled to sign at his instance. This was a perfect repetition, in fact, a continuation and worse than a continuation of what they had done in Rome, when they used against me a fabricated report of the Bishop of Waterford and intercepted the genuine one.

But this was not all that he did in this case. When I again discovered that he was still using the false and retracted evidence against me in Rome, he said that it was now all a mistake on his part, and that I should and would have a full opportunity of giving my evidence before the Sacred Congregation in Rome and of producing my proofs of what this brother did, for that he would secure this rightful privilege for me. But when the time came for me to go to Rome to give this evidence, Abbot John Baptist had totally disappeared; and then the Abbot-General refused me permission to go there, threatening me with excommunication from the Order if I attempted

to do any such thing. So that I should have been finally and irrevocably condemned on this false evidence in Rome had I not succeeded in getting a lawyer there and again exposed them. How I came to know that the Inquisitor was still using this evidence against me in Rome will be revealed when we come to the trials there in 1907.

In the same way the Inquisitor and his Secretary tried to force Brother A. to testify against me, but this brother indignantly refused. Brother B. not only refused to give false evidence but insisted on swearing the truth, and testified to the General Chapter and to the Sacred Congregation that the Inquisitor attacked him "like a raging lunatic"—the brother's own words—because he refused to give false evidence and insisted on swearing the truth. These and innumerable other such cases having been publicly known at Mount Melleray, the prohibitions were intended to close our lips about them all, and would have done it effectually only that the conduct of the Inquisitor and his Secretary raised such a storm in the end that it swept the prohibitions away like a feather before the wind, and then all came out.

This, again, was only the old weapon used in a new way. The Inquisitor was getting together unfounded charges and manufacturing proofs of them, decking them all out as if they were genuine, and then using his perverted ingenuity to prevent us from ever exposing himself and his huge mass of charges and evidence. But we need not wonder at this when we remember how the men in Rome in 1904, sent the Bishop of Waterford to hold a similar enquiry for them in order to give the thing an appearance of justice and fair play; and then forged for themselves the report condemning me, and intercepted the true and genuine one that vindicated and justified me.

What I have related up to the present came to light at Mount Melleray or immediately after the Inquisition there in January, 1906. But through a secret letter that fell into our hands, and from other sources, we discovered before the trials in Rome in 1907 that there was not one of the old refuted calumnies and slanders that we have mentioned in the earlier chapters, even those that had been publicly retracted by the calumniators themselves, that Abbot John had not forwarded to Rome against me as if they were all proved facts. And to these charges he annexed a whole catalogue of charges of his own invention, and represented them as being proved against me by superabundant evidence.

He even made it appear that the Bishop's enquiry had found me guilty of all, and that my mind had been proved to be wrong long before I went to Mount Melleray, inventing himself the most ex-

traordinary and unfounded proofs to show that all this, and numbers of other things which will be given when we come to the trials in Rome, had been fully established against me. But having discovered all this, and having secured a lawyer in Rome, we sent overwhelming evidence there in 1907 and 1908 that more than refuted them: it tore them to pieces and fully exposed their guilty plots.

CHAPTER III

I

WE now come to some of Abbot John's other plans and schemes for effecting his designs.

From the beginning he had refused to permit any evidence that was favourable to me. But he soon discovered that this was stirring up a regular storm of indignation against him in the community; and in order to quell this threatened outburst he now somewhat changed his tactics in this regard.

After he and his Secretary had spent a week trying, as we have seen, to manufacture evidence, he now sent for me three times, that is, once every day for three successive days. He left the place, however, each time by a back way almost immediately after I entered, leaving me behind to converse with his Secretary, so that it might appear to the community that he was giving me ample time and opportunity to make my defence. He showed afterwards that it was for this purpose he left me so long with the Secretary, for he quoted in Public Chapter the length of time that I was in his room, to show how fairly he had treated me and the full opportunity he had given me of defending myself. But while he was making this, like so many of his other ridiculous statements, as if Irishmen had neither ears to hear, eyes to see, nor minds to understand what he was doing, the whole community saw for themselves, and knew perfectly well, that except for a few minutes he was not in the room at all when I was there, and that, therefore, he was simply trying to deceive them.

On the first day he did not spend more than seven or eight minutes with me. During that short time, however, I showed him all the documentary evidence I had, and tendered the names of the several witnesses who were to prove the falsehood of the stories, and of the calumnies and slanders my opponents had spread against me, as also that these calumnies and slanders were all originated at the Monastery by the party themselves, and that the persons who

circulated them outside were employed to do so, just as we have seen these things so often and so overwhelmingly proved before. I tendered likewise similar evidence, including Abbot Eugene's reports and the names of several witnesses, proving that my accusers were guilty and convicted of the things of which they accused me, and of causing all the trouble in the church and at the confessional, as well as inside in the Monastery. In fact, as we shall see, when we come to deal with the General Chapter in France in September, 1906, and the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908, I tendered a complete and overwhelming refutation of all the evidence he had been so dishonestly amassing.

He point blank refused to receive in evidence either documents, letters or names of witnesses, or in fact any evidence whatever on the subject, saying that this was not the sort of thing he came for, but giving me no further information. We shall see as we proceed that he has to admit this himself.

I then insisted on giving documentary proofs and tendering other evidence regarding the false charge of having directly violated the seal of confession, made against me at the Bishop's enquiry in January, 1904, as also the fact that the Bishop had decided that the two persons who had made this charge and sworn to it must have conspired together to bring the charge against me and to support it by false evidence, as well as of the fact that they had caused this unparalleled calumny to be circulated both inside the Monastery and outside. The Inquisitor would listen to nothing in the world on this subject, saying again that this was not what he came to inquire into, nor the sort of evidence he wanted. He then left, shouting back to me that there never was any such charge made against me, and that it only existed in my own diseased imagination, thundering threats and denunciations at me for daring to imagine such a thing. The summary I had just given him of the evidence I proposed to produce manifestly confounded and nonplussed him to such a degree that he seemed to have lost for the moment all self-control, but he still thought to intimidate me from proceeding further with it. Before he left, however, I told him that he was far mistaken if he thought to frighten me by his threats and blustering, or that he was blinding me or the community by his manifestly deceitful conduct; and that neither Cardinal Ferrata nor Monsignor Guistini nor anyone else could empower him to do the things that he was openly doing.

I remained, nevertheless, with the Secretary, and informed him of the overwhelming mass of evidence I had ready at hand to prove who were the real disturbers, both in the church and at the Monastery, and to prove also that I had neither given occasion in any way

nor been the cause anywhere of disturbing the peace. I then showed and explained to him these documents and evidence that so fully established my whole case. I saw at once his great anxiety to get hold of them for the Inquisitor, without his having to admit them as evidence or being anywise bound by their contents. In the end he asked them of me for the night, but I refused to give them, saying that I would think over the matter until morning.

When Abbot John himself sent for me next day he assumed an air of the greatest civility, apologizing for what he had said the day before; saying that they had deceived him about what had occurred at the Bishop's enquiry, and that he had made a mistake because he did not understand the gravity of the case; but that he now knew I was right, and intended, therefore, to remain another week and give me ample time and opportunity for proving my case fully. Of course, all this was only said to deceive, for he never did anything of the kind. He said also that he had been very much influenced by what the Secretary had told him about the documents and letters, and that he would be greatly pleased if I would let him have them until the next day in order to read them over; promising again and again on his word of honour to return them on the morrow.

After having now carefully considered the matter I resolved to give them. This I did, though he still refused to accept them as evidence, because I saw that, no matter how he might act, this would in effect be equal to accepting their evidence. And the documents with the accompanying notes contained all the evidence I could then give, with the names also of the witnesses; while I had copies of most of them and in some cases the originals, and, if needs be, could prove the contents of the rest. So that the Inquisitor with all his legal cunning was in reality admitting all my evidence, while I had quite sufficient proofs remaining to establish my case in any proceedings we might afterwards have to take in Rome or elsewhere. If he intercepted them then, or kept them to himself, it would only be another proof of his dishonest conduct.

I learned, however, soon afterwards that he gave even my private and confidential notes to my opponents to read; and they were able to quote them and use them, and even said they contained many things they did not contain at all, while Abbot John himself concocted out of them another catalogue of charges against me, as will be seen when we come to the trials in Rome. At the same time he forcibly carried away with him from the Monastery every one of these papers in order to destroy the evidence in my favour which they contained.

As things proceeded it became more and more manifest at every

step that all this deception had been deliberately planned to screen and cloak the wrong and injustice which Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini, Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General had done me in Rome, and to have a bitter revenge for the way I had exposed them there. And the conduct of the Inquisitor and his Secretary had now made it equally manifest to all that they were men who would stop at nothing in order to effect their purpose.

I was, therefore, anxious to have all the clear proof of this possible, for I saw that this was the only means now by which I could hope to save myself from them, that is, by being able to expose fully their unscrupulous conduct. With this end in view I informed the Inquisitor that on one occasion when the Abbot was away from the Monastery and one of my opponents in control, I was left for three days in the refectory without bread. I submitted this case like all the others now in writing, and I cited as witness in the case the father who sat next me in the refectory and shared his bread with me, so that it was one that he could not overlook. The Inquisitor told me he would certainly investigate the case and examine the father sitting next me about it. I asked him afterwards if he had got this evidence proving the charge I had made, for I knew he had not. He said he had got all. But this father, who had been next me in the refectory, sent to the Sacred Congregation his sworn testimony of the truth of this charge; proving also on oath that the Inquisitor never asked him a word about it, nor would he permit him to speak of it; but that he tried to force him to testify that he had heard me saying offensive things in the refectory about the father that was opposed to me, and that the Inquisitor had also tried his utmost to make him testify falsely about my treatment of the children in the church. There were dozens of cases like this proved on oath and forwarded to Rome and to the General Chapter against the Inquisitor and his Secretary in order to prove what sort of tactics they practised to show that I had no evidence. For how could I prove anything under a system like this? And while all this practice of amassing false evidence, and of preventing me by such tactics from being able to refute it, was going on under the eyes of the whole community, no one dare open their lips to utter one word of protest or remonstrance. Abbot John's constant cry was that to do anything of the kind against himself or his Secretary would be a gross act of contempt of the Holy See and of the Pope, whose dignity and authority they represented.

II

AFTER the conviction of the men in Rome in May, 1905, and in compliance with the rules of the Order and the injunctions of his Super-

iors, particularly Abbot Eugene of Melleray in France, the Abbot set himself earnestly to work in order to establish peace and concord in the place, and to have the discipline of the Order and its rules and regulations faithfully observed at Mount Melleray. He quickly and easily effected this, for no one could now—for the present at least—interfere with his legitimate authority. It is true that almost at the same time the usual emissary, the pretended doctor, came from Rome to gather his customary crowds of women and girls to the place, and to endeavour to keep up the excitement and agitation of the past. But the Abbot told him forthwith that he, too, must observe the rules and decencies of religion or leave the place. This last he did, so that until Abbot John's arrival as Inquisitor in January, 1906, perfect peace and good order reigned among the members of the community, everywhere in and around the Monastery. Compared with the past, Mount Melleray was then a peaceful paradise, and unless disturbed by external agencies there was no reason why it should not continue to be so.

But this was exactly what Abbot John and those he represented did not now want. For how could they pretend to convict me of being either the "cause" or "occasion" of keeping the peace of the place disturbed when the peace was not disturbed at all? Abbot John, however, quickly set about finding some remedy for this. His first effort was to re-establish, and authorize in the pretended name of the Pope, the undue and disturbing intercourse that had gone on in the past between the women and girls, and certain of the refractory monks at the college and lodge—that intercourse which had been the cause of all the trouble in the past, and which was sure to fill the Monastery very soon again with confusion. The Abbot promptly put down his foot, and publicly put a stop to this, telling Abbot John that he was trampling on the Pope's own order, under the false pretence that he had power to do it from persons who could not give any such power to him, and pointing, in the Laws and Rules of the Order, to the Pope's own words in proof thereof.

Abbot John had, therefore, to adopt other means of attaining the sinister end he had now in view. Here is how he did it.

All the evidence at this enquiry was to be given in secret before the Inquisitor and his Secretary, each successive witness being alone with them, and the Secretary, like all concerned, being bound on oath to secrecy. This is, in fact, the invariable rule at all enquiries in the Order; otherwise the peace and charity of the community, where men were supposed to spend their lives together in peace, would be destroyed, and bitterness, ill-feeling and uncharitableness, that would ruin and destroy any community, would very soon be generated.

But what did Abbot John do? We have seen that up to this he had refused to receive any evidence, either from me or in my favour, with regard to any of the charges. He now pretended, however, that he had changed his mind, and that he was going to afford me ample opportunities of refuting the charge of having caused or occasioned the disturbance of the peace at the Monastery, by showing that it was others, particularly those at the lodge, the college and the shop, that had done it, by their keeping girls and women in these places and encouraging them to attack and slander me among the people; by sending them also to the church to disturb it and attack myself and the penitents coming to me, and by then screening and hiding them away to save them from detection. After pretending that he was now going to give me full opportunity of proving these things, he declared that it was only fair and just that the persons accused of doing this should know these charges from me, before being called on to answer them. He then brought one of the brothers into the room to hear them all from me. This was a thing unheard of or even undreamt of before. It was an outrage on the inviolable secrecy of such monastic enquiries.

But when the brother had heard all from me, the Inquisitor—the brother being still present—declared that he would not allow any evidence to be given on this matter, as it was not what he had come to enquire into; nor the sort of evidence that was wanted by the General Chapter and the Sacred Congregation. Why, then, did he promise that he would accept the evidence, and why did he bring the brother to hear the charges I made when he would not allow me to prove them?

As can be easily seen from the earlier chapters, I had the Abbot, not only by his own evidence, but by numerous letters from seculars, to prove the facts, their seriousness, and how much they had disturbed the peace of the church and of the Monastery. I had also the letters of Abbot Eugene and his reports of the inquisition made by himself and Abbot Stanislaus in 1898, 1900 and 1903; I had the Bishop's report to prove the case; I had six other witnesses—for this was the kernel of the whole inquisition—to prove the truth of my charges, the gravity and seriousness of the acts, and the manifest culpability of those concerned in the business. But now no evidence would be permitted, and my opponents could say that I had made false charges against them, and they could quote Abbot John's words and acts in proof of this. Here, then, was plenty of material to destroy the peace and charity of the Monastery, and to arouse bad passions and ill-feelings in the community. And I was to be held responsible for it all. But who was the cause, and the deliberate cause,

of it, if not Abbot John himself? Of course, it was to conceal this, too, that the "prohibition" about the Inquisitor and his Secretary and their doings was added; so that, as they thought, they could now perpetrate it all in secret and unknown to the world.

There was much more of this sort of thing, for the Inquisitor and his Secretary now left nothing undone to enkindle and inflame ill-feelings in the community and to destroy the peace and charity of the Monastery, and then attribute it all to me. For example, when Brother B. tendered evidence in my favour, and gave the names of the brothers and fathers who kept the girls calumniating and slandered me, and attacking myself and the penitents coming to confession to me in the church, the Inquisitor, while refusing to accept the evidence and violently abusing the brother for daring to give any evidence whatever for me, revealed every word of it to two members of the community, so that it became known to every one. It was the same, more or less, with regard to every witness who attempted to give evidence in my favour. Abbot John and his Secretary were thus not only amassing false evidence and stifling the truth, but also enkindling ill-feelings and bad passions through the whole community and destroying the peace of the Monastery. And then I was to be punished for it all under the false guise that it was I who was the cause and occasion of it.

CHAPTER IV

I

It was, however, at the closing session of the Visitation that Abbot John and his Secretary far surpassed all their previous records. They kept the finishing blows for the end. And that they might escape unscathed when they had delivered them, the Inquisitor had already sent the Secretary to inform myself and others that he intended to stop another week in order to afford ample opportunities for proving my case, and producing all the evidence that could be given in my favour; for at least a dozen most important witnesses had tendered such evidence, and had vainly insisted on its being accepted. But instead of remaining for a week they had everything prepared in secret, and the carriage in readiness, in order to rush out of the Monastery and away to France with all my papers the moment they closed the session, without giving me or anyone else even one second to remonstrate.

There is one case, however, in connexion with this closing session

to which I limit myself, particularly as it sufficiently illustrates the spirit that permeated the whole proceedings, and proves once more for us that these two men, who were posing as the high and disinterested representatives of the Pope, were nothing more than a pair of detectives endeavouring by every means imaginable to work out a heartless conspiracy of deception.

The case was this. It will be remembered that on my first appearing before the Inquisitor I mentioned the false charge made to the Bishop against me of having directly violated the seal of confession, and that the two individuals who made this charge and swore to it had been convicted at the Bishop's enquiry of conspiring together to make it, and to support it, as they did, by false evidence. It will be remembered likewise how he flew into a rage when I mentioned this, declaring that such a charge had never been made against me at all and that it only existed in my own diseased imagination. On the second day he merely mentioned this case; but when he sent for me on the third occasion, as he now knew from my papers, and from the evidence of one of my witnesses, the overwhelming and incontrovertible proofs with which I could establish the case in any court, he admitted that he was entirely wrong, saying that both the men whom I had charged acknowledged, now that they had made this charge, that it was false; and that both of them acknowledged that what they had sworn was not true in fact. He admitted also that my witness had proved this in a way that could admit of no doubt. But he said that both the accused claimed that the falsehood of their charge and the inaccuracy of their evidence came from haste and want of deliberation, and from other circumstances of which they were not aware, and that it did not come in any sense from malice.

I replied that they had nearly five months from August to January to deliberate. Besides, how could the whole thing be otherwise than deliberate, when they swore that Mrs O. had verbally accused me to one of themselves of revealing the secrets of her confession, and swore that Mrs O. had written a letter accusing me of violating the seal of her confession; whereas she was not at confession with me at all? Moreover, I showed that the evidence could not be otherwise than wilful and deliberate, when, to show that no one but Mrs O., in the confessional, could have told me what I knew, they swore that none of the girls who had been in the shop when the occurrence took place had ever spoken or could have spoken to anyone at the Monastery about the subject, whereas they both knew that the girls had spoken to the witness who testified in my favour, and that they had told him all about what had occurred in the shop; and when everybody knew that these girls were speaking to hundreds of persons at

the Monastery for a whole week after the occurrence in question had taken place.

In order that he might not be able to deny having received these proofs, or refuse to hear the case, I handed them to him in writing together with the other proofs already seen in the account of the Bishop's sworn enquiry. The Inquisitor on this evidence had now to admit that the guilt was there, and must lie somewhere between them and the Bishop. My two accusers had, therefore, to make a full and unqualified admission of their guilt, as otherwise the Bishop would have had to be examined in order to show that he had not invented the false charge and evidence himself.

Both of them having admitted their guilt I insisted further that the Inquisitor must report this case fully to the General Chapter and to the Sacred Congregation, as it was, in fact, the key of the whole situation. It proved not only the deliberate falsehood of the accusation and the conspiracy to sustain it by false evidence, but it proved also that these men had, when the Abbot was away in August and September, 1903, kept the women calumniating and slandering me to everyone coming to the Monastery, and attacking me and the penitents coming to me in the church. This was manifest, for it was what they had accused me of having heard from Mrs O. in her confession. And they had fully admitted these things that had occurred in the shop, in order to strengthen thereby, as they thought, the false charge of the violation of the seal of confession.

When I insisted on a full report of all this being made by the Inquisitor, his reply was "that this was not the evidence the General Chapter and the Sacred Congregation had sent him to Mount Melleray to obtain, and that he had examined the case not in the capacity of Extraordinary Inquisitor for the Sacred Congregation or the General Chapter, but as a friendly intermediary." I replied "that this was a distinction without a difference, for that he knew the facts now and was bound to report them." But he positively refused to make any report at all of the case either to the General Chapter or to the Sacred Congregation, saying "that I was now only trying to force open doors," seeing that the men had admitted their fault. My reply was that with much difficulty we had, indeed, now forced open the door; but that he had still the criminals concealed from detection inside, in order to let them escape through the open window when he had got the door closed again. But as one may bring a horse to the well, but a thousand could not make him drink, so I could go no further than I had done to make him do me justice in the case by reporting the true facts to Rome and the General Chapter. And this—though manifestly bound to do—he never did.

The Inquisitor, however, drew up a statement in which the two men who were proved guilty agreed that he, in their name and by their authorization, should declare in the public assembly of the whole community that they had falsely accused me at the Bishop's enquiry of directly violating the seal of confession; that they acknowledged that the charge and all the allegations relating to it were false and groundless; that nothing that they swore against me on the subject was true in fact and, furthermore, that they authorized the Abbot of the Monastery to make the same declaration to those outside the community who had heard of the matter. The Inquisitor then pledged himself to me that all this would be done by himself in the Public Chapter of the community.

II

HERE, again, is where his deceptive conduct comes in. Besides the Abbot, Father Thomas and myself, all of whom knew otherwise all about the case, there were only two in the community who could at all understand the retraction and reparation that in French was to be made to me by my two accusers through the Inquisitor. But before commencing to make his retraction and reparation, under the pretence that these two, who understood French perfectly, were wanted elsewhere, he caused them to be removed from the General Chapter where he was to make it. Then in French, which none of the others present understood, he made full retraction and full reparation for all the charges that my accusers had made, and for the evidence which they had given against me.

But, on the other hand, in English, which every one of the sixty members of the community present understood, his Secretary and Interpreter changed all the Inquisitor had said in French, and declared most emphatically that all that was sworn against me at the Bishop's enquiry was now proved to be true; that there had been no false evidence given on that occasion by anyone, and that I was only "almost innocent of violating the seal of confession." The Interpreter then twisted this "almost innocent" through a labyrinth of involved sentences, until he brought me out quite guilty of the crime at the end.

Eight witnesses who were present, seven of them priests and including the Abbot, have sworn to this; some giving the precise words, some their clear import and meaning, but all agreeing that they clearly signified that, both at the Bishop's sworn enquiry and at this further investigation by the Inquisitor, I had been found guilty of the terrible crime of directly violating the seal of confession.

The enormity and perversity of this can scarcely be conceived or imagined by anyone except a Roman Catholic. Several of the witnesses swore that though they had always gone to confession to me before, and continued still to go to confession to me, yet if they had believed that there was the least shadow of truth in what this Interpreter publicly declared, nothing in the world could have ever induced them to go any more to confession to me. All the witnesses swore that nothing ever shocked them so much as this cowardly declaration, made in Public Chapter by the Inquisitor through his Secretary and Interpreter; and that the way in which it was made, as well as the careful but involved language in which it was couched, showed that the whole affair was previously prepared and, therefore, deliberate and wilful on the part of the Inquisitor and his Secretary. Some of them also swore that they believed that none but men who were complete infidels could have acted as the Inquisitor and his Secretary did in this matter. There was surely plenty of "proof" in this declaration made by the Interpreter that I was the cause and occasion why the peace of the Monastery was disturbed. But who, again was it that put that false proof into the declaration but the Secretary of the Inquisitor himself?

That the whole thing was deliberately planned and arranged between the Inquisitor and the Interpreter, and that Abbot John himself was quite as guilty as his Interpreter, was clearly enough shown by every circumstance that accompanied the declaration. But, the case being so important, I resolved to have proof of this if possible, from his own words and his own acts; because I saw that this was what he wanted to avoid, and that he was plainly using the Interpreter to do the evil work for him, so that he might be able to deny having done it himself, and then make it appear that nobody had done it. This is one of the legerdemain tricks that these men constantly play; and Abbot John himself will show us in the next chapter how he tried to work the game.

III

THE closing session of the Inquisition was interrupted for a time, so I went to the room where the Inquisitor was then conversing with the Abbot. I told him in the presence of the Abbot what his Interpreter and Secretary had done. The Abbot told him the same. The Inquisitor would listen to nothing, saying that it was impossible that the Secretary would do such a thing; and he absolutely refused to permit any retraction or reparation whatever, always harping on the manifestly deceptive cry that he himself had done me ample

justice, and that I should be satisfied with that, instead of continuing to force open doors; as if it made no difference to the community whether the reparation and retraction were in French or English. Whereas he knew quite well that not one of the others understood a word of the French that he spoke to them, and that owing to his "Prohibitions," neither the Abbot nor Father T. nor myself dare tell it to any of them. It was the "Prohibitions" that were to clinch every nail in my coffin.

His effrontery would seem incredible to anyone who did not witness it. He would listen to nothing; he pretended to feel terribly offended and to feel also that the high dignity of his office and position was terribly insulted. In the end he stormed and raged like one who had lost all self-control, saying that if I were an humble religious I would submit to the Apostolic delegate, and that I was guilty of contempt of the Holy See by my conduct in making such an accusation against himself and his Secretary. My reply was that a deliberate and a cowardly lie was a lie no matter who uttered it; that it was he himself and his Interpreter, by their shameless conduct, seen through by everybody, that were bringing the name of religion and the Holy See into contempt; for that nobody could entertain anything but contempt for what they were doing from the moment they opened their sham inquisition. I further stated that to oppose the fraudulent misdeeds of both of them, particularly in this business, was a duty I owed to myself and to my character, not only as an individual, but as a priest and public confessor, and that it was a duty I would discharge at the peril of my life. The Abbot, too, tried to reason with the Inquisitor, but had likewise to tell him in the end that his conduct was scandalous and disgraceful. The Abbot has sworn to these facts.

After this I consulted the best guides I could approach on the subject, including the Abbot, for it was a truly momentous one for me. All agreed that no matter what might be the consequences I could not in justice to my character as a priest and public confessor go back to the closing of the session until the Interpreter's false statements were fully and publicly retracted, and the truth told. They all agreed, likewise, that it was plain that the thing was previously arranged between the Inquisitor and his Secretary on the one side, and my convicted calumniators on the other; for these latter were already openly congratulating each other on what the Secretary had done for them; thinking, of course, that the wrong done me was now irreparable. My advisers were agreed also that this public protest of staying away was the only means I had of bringing the whole matter to a crisis before the community, as I should get no opportunity otherwise of speaking one word in self-defence or

vindication and that if I attempted to justify myself in the Chapter Room, I should be thrown out of it by the party opposed to me. It was their opinion also that this sort of thing was what the Inquisitor was now aiming at in order to make it appear to the Abbots of the General Chapter and in Rome that it was I that was the cause and occasion of all the trouble. They, therefore, on many grounds, unanimously agreed that it was right and proper that I should stay away from the final closing of the session.

Consequently, though the Inquisitor sent a messenger for me, ordering me to attend the closing of the session, I stayed away, saying to the messenger that I would go the Chapter Room when the Inquisitor made his Secretary withdraw his infamous calumnies; otherwise, that I must necessarily absent myself as a public protest against the outrageous conduct of both the Inquisitor and his Secretary. Then Abbot John declared me guilty of contempt of the authority of the Holy See, and fulminated against me threats of the utmost vengeance and punishment. However, his own scandalous conduct and that of his Secretary were now so glaringly exposed that he had to acknowledge and retract what his Interpreter had said, and to give the Abbot a written statement to be read to the whole community, withdrawing every word of it; fully justifying thereby all I had said and done, and fully clearing my character. And next morning when his head cooled down he sent back a very repentant telegram from Waterford, for he left the Monastery immediately after the scene was over. In this telegram he most humbly withdrew all the threats and menaces he had made, and promised faithfully to return all my papers that he had carried away, for I had repeatedly demanded them of him before he left. This he has never done.

Thus ended for the present, in their own exposure, this painful parting episode in which the Inquisitor and his Secretary had so insidiously and so treacherously sought to inflict on me an utterly irreparable wrong and injustice. For if they had got away I could never to the Day of Judgment have got this slanderous statement retracted. It now, however, only revealed to the whole community what Abbot John and his Secretary really were.

But we shall soon see how, under another false guise, Abbot John vainly tried, and still more miserably failed, to deliver himself this same treacherous blow that his Secretary had failed to land.

IV

NINE or ten of the priests and solemnly professed brethren of the community at once wrote to the Holy See complaining of the outrageous conduct of Abbot John and his Secretary all through the

visitation, and of the unscrupulous manner in which they had treated me. They detailed at the same time what had occurred at the Inquisition, showing, moreover, that it was by no means an honest enquiry to discover the truth, but that the Inquisitor and his Secretary had made every possible effort to suppress and conceal the real facts and to force the witnesses to give untruthful evidence against me.

Then the Inquisitor wrote to the Abbot admitting that I had not got an opportunity of making my defence, and of exposing the guilt of my opponents, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome. He pretended now that he did not understand matters, when he was holding the Inquisition and making the enquiries at Mount Melleray. To this he added, "Then, I ask myself now, if I should not cut short my report to Rome, declaring to the Sacred Congregation that I feel it beyond my powers to make any report, and humbly advising the Sacred Congregation itself to hear poor Father Isidore directly and without any intermediary. Do you think the good Father will be satisfied with this? Write your opinion." This was an admission by himself that his enquiry was not only a fraud but a failure. The Abbot directly wrote to him saying that I demanded and insisted on being fully heard, and on my right of putting my whole evidence before the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation. This was on January 24, 1906. And as if it were now definitely arranged that I was to be heard directly by the Sacred Congregation, and to have a full and fair opportunity of putting my whole case and all my evidence when the time came for it before the authorities in Rome, he wrote to myself on February 5 as follows:—"Since you desire and demand to be heard directly by the Sacred Congregation formulate that demand, and I will arrange for your being so heard when necessary." These letters are still in existence.

I did so. But when it was too late I discovered that this again was another deceptive move in the game, to mark time until he could prevent me from writing to the Holy See and from otherwise exposing his conduct. When the time came for me to go to Rome to make my defence, and when I wrote for the promised permission, Abbot John having now completely disappeared from the scene, it was the Abbot-General that replied refusing it. He said he had no power to do so unless the Inquisitor had authorized and empowered him thereto, as the Inquisitor's power, being direct from the Sacred Congregation for this particular case, overruled the powers and authority of the Abbot-General.

All this time, as we shall find further on, Abbot John was secretly using against me in Rome the whole mass of untruthful evidence that

he had collected at Mount Melleray. It was the deceptive game of double shuffle all over again. The Inquisitor was secretly using in Rome the false evidence against me, and then writing to me that if I desired I should have an opportunity of putting my evidence before the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation. He could thus make it appear to the judges in Rome that I had got full opportunity of proving my innocence there, but did not dare to avail myself of it; while all the time knowing that the Abbot-General would prevent me from having any opportunity whatsoever of doing so. And shielded thus by the Abbot-General he could, therefore, work out his plans in Rome, not only in secrecy but in perfect safety: which, of course, was only another form of the use of the forged report of the Bishop's enquiry in 1904, and the interception until May, 1905, of the true and genuine one, and of the other evidence in my favour.

It is easy to see how this system of secretly trying men in a remote country and in their absence lends itself to the greatest abuses; and that this method is abused to the utmost is what the remainder of our narrative will specially demonstrate.

CHAPTER V

I

WHAT I now proceed to relate happened long before the Abbot-General's refusal to allow me to be examined directly by the Sacred Congregation. I had to introduce that episode by anticipation, in order to show the Inquisitor's dishonesty in making such deceptive promises, just as the forger's guilt is known only when the forgery is detected and proved.

In consideration, then, of the pretended reparation which the Inquisitor had promised to make for the wrongs done me, and particularly to smooth matters so that if his promises were again broken he could have no excuse for it in my conduct, I wrote to Abbot John offering to make whatever reparation he might—without violating the truth and justice of the case—consider necessary and suitable for any disedification that might have been caused by my not being able to go to the closing session of the visitation. I did this without being in any way bound thereto or even asked to do so, as all had now to admit that I was right in not going; the honour and integrity of the seal of confession being of infinitely greater importance than any mere act of monastic discipline.

Besides, the monastic rule prescribes that it yields to a law that is

of a higher order than itself; such as is the integrity of the Sacramental seal of confession and the respect due to it.

However, I was anxious after vindicating the honour of the seal of confession to make reparation for what might appear to some weak-minded members of the community to be an infringement of monastic obedience. I did this precisely in the form and in the words required of me, even by the Inquisitor himself, without adding to or taking one iota from it. But what was my utter astonishment when, without one word of notice beforehand, I heard in Public Chapter the following letter read out before the whole community on the next Sunday morning, there not being any justification in the world for its unfounded statements and allegations.

“ My dear Fathers and Brothers,

“ I learn that a religious who on the day of the reading of the Visitation card had given scandal by an act of disobedience instead of (as he offered to me to do in order to repair the scandal) confining himself to reading the eight or ten words which I allowed him, and which I precisely stated in the form of a *coulpe*, that is, a Chapter accusation of himself and a mere act of humility, has added certain words of his own more than regrettable, and which I absolutely blame. I, too fondly, thought that on both sides there was now going to be only a rivalry of religious spirit—of the spirit of Our Lord—to obtain the ‘*Cor unum*,’ the union of hearts. But these words instead of effacing the scandal have only aggravated it. Moreover, the religious has failed to obey the command, which I issued in virtue of Holy Obedience, forbidding any of the professed to speak in private and *a fortiori* in public of such questions.

“ I hereby declare that I maintain absolutely every word I used in the Chapter, even those which (much as I regret it, for I would have wished to have imparted joy to all) did not give satisfaction to this particular religious. I declare that I maintain them of my full knowledge and after examination. It is useless to insist further; I should be utterly unreasonable, and a man swayed by imagination, if I did not yield to the evidence of the proofs which I hold in my hand.

“ JOHN BAPTIST CHAUTARD.”

II

BEFORE coming to the vital points of this letter there are a few things that must be premised. The first is that along with it there came to the Abbot an order, just like the “Prohibitions,” forbidding under the severest penalties either the Abbot or myself to speak to, write

to or communicate regarding its contents with anyone except through the Inquisitor himself. And it is only when the nature of the letter itself is exposed that the full meaning of this can be understood; for this meant that none of the falsehoods and allegations the letter contained were ever to be even questioned, much less contradicted and disproved.

The second thing to be noted is that I have, in the Inquisitor's own handwriting, the letter in which the reparation referred to and the words in which it was agreed upon between Abbot John and myself are contained, and this was what I had read word for word in the Chapter Room in the presence of the whole community.

On my part here is the explanation I proposed to make:

"In regard to my refusing to be present at the closing session of our recent Visitation, I hereby most solemnly and conscientiously declare that I did not do so in any spirit of contempt for the authority of the Holy See, as it would appear that it seemed to the Apostolic Inquisitor that I had done. I did it because his Secretary, in translating what had occurred, misrepresented the full and complete retraction made to me in French through the Inquisitor by the two priests, on account of the false charge they had made against me of violating the seal of confession and the false evidence they gave when endeavouring to support their charge."

Having made this explanation of my conduct in the simplest words I could, and without mentioning the names of the two persons concerned in it, I then said to the Inquisitor that I was prepared to do anything necessary for whatever violation of monastic rule there might have been in the course I had felt bound to take. Here then are the words in which the Inquisitor agreed to this:

"Since your spirit of faith inspires you to say to me that you are ready to make for your refusal to come to the last Chapter the reparation of which you speak" (you see it is not merely the reparation that he might wish, but what I agreed to and suggested), "I, therefore, propose that you will do so in the Chapter of the choir and lay brethren at the time the Abbot tells you to do it, adding for the breach of monastic discipline as follows:

"I declare, moreover, that I regret any scandal that may have arisen from my refusal to come to the closing Chapter of the Visitation, and I affirm that I have spontaneously written to the Right Rev. Visitor that I accept in advance whatever penance he may impose on me."

He imposed no penance, a proof in itself that I had done nothing that was wrong, since he was bound to impose a penance if I had done wrong.

Again, if I had gone beyond what was agreed upon between us, why did he not point out what it was that was wrong in what I had read in the Chapter room? For the words were there and the witnesses, too. The reason was that there was not a word read by me but what we agreed upon. Why did he not say: "Father Isidore said so-and-so and it was wrong?" For it was a case where he had ready at hand both the charges that he was making and insinuating and the witnesses. But both charges and witnesses would have proved me innocent and himself merely a prevaricator.

If he had stated the charges there was his own handwriting and over sixty witnesses to prove him so; the witnesses having heard what I read in Chapter, and what I read in Chapter being word for word what was contained in his own letter. But by giving no definite charges, but indulging in these vague generalities, he implied the falsehood of what I read out; because none of those listening except the Abbot—whose lips, like my own, he sealed by the Prohibition given above—could know anything about what the Inquisitor had agreed to and had written to the Abbot and myself; nor could either of us speak a word about it to anyone. This was a clear case of suppressing the truth, and insidiously asserting what was false; and then preventing his falsehoods being refuted.

However, to make it appear certain to the listeners that he is speaking truth, and according to the book, he says: "I learnt it," that is that I had violated the terms of the reparation I was to make. But from whom did he learn it? The name of anyone from whom he had ever learned anything about it never was given and never could be given.

This is very plain; for there was one person and one only besides myself who knew anything about the terms in which the reparation was to be made, and that one person was the Abbot; and the Abbot testified that I used in Chapter the words agreed upon, and his own letter, as we have seen, shows the same. Therefore, he could not possibly have learned it from anybody. What he writes here is, therefore, untrue from beginning to end, and could not be otherwise. It has not one word of truth or foundation, as he had to admit when brought to the test in Rome in 1908, for he tried there to eliminate this whole incident out of the case; but we did not permit him to do so until we had proved its falsehood.

Then he denounced me before the whole community for violating the "Prohibition." But who was it that ordered me to do so if not Abbot John himself? Do his own words in that very letter not show this? And did he not, therefore, know that I was only doing the very thing he himself commanded? But, of course, on account of the vague

generalities he had used, the listeners could not know or detect this; for they did not know what he had commanded, and he does not tell them and we dared not. Here, then, was another artful but very manifest trick of the dishonest rhetorician to belie and blacken me. And all this would prove, too, that I was the occasion why the Monastery was disturbed.

III

BUT this was not all; it was only the peg on which to hang one of the most unfounded calumnies any man ever uttered. It is from his own words that this is proved. He says:—"I hereby declare that I maintain absolutely every word I used in Chapter, even those which (much as I regret it, for I would have wished to have imparted joy to all) did not give satisfaction to this particular religious." Here we have a long parenthesis to protest his charity, and to help to conceal his want of charity as well as to confound the listener. We, therefore, for the present leave it out, and then analyse his statement.

He has here two very distinct propositions under a form that makes it appear to the unwary and untrained listener that there is only one. One of these is:—"I maintain every word I used in Chapter," the other, quite a distinct proposition—is—"I maintain even those words which did not give satisfaction." The first proposition is true in fact, the second is false and utterly deceptive and could only be meant to deceive. But there are also two other implied but suppressed propositions in this enthymeme, one is, "The words I used in Chapter did not give satisfaction to this particular religious"; and the other is "the words that did not give satisfaction are the words that I used in Chapter." Both these are false and, therefore, we have three false propositions and one that is true.

Let us examine this matter a little, for logicians tell us that this crowding into one assertion two or more propositions which look in some respect like each other, or rather like the same thing, is one of the ways by which dishonest rhetoricians use false and deceptive reasonings and untrue statements, without being detected by the unwary and untrained listeners.

Now, does the expression "Every word I used in Chapter" mean the same thing as "Even those that did not give satisfaction to this particular religious," for that is what he wants to make the listeners believe? Or is the latter in any way contained in the former, for that is the meaning of the words as they lie in this letter? This is the first of his many fallacies; for the two assertions are as much opposed to each other as day is to night, or truth to falsehood, while

the Inquisitor uses them as if they not only meant, but were the very same thing. Any reader can see this.

Every word the Inquisitor used in Chapter was true, and did give satisfaction to this particular religious, meaning myself; for he had to declare in Chapter that my accusers admitted that at the Bishop's enquiry they had falsely accused me of directly violating the seal of confession, and that all they swore against me on that occasion was false in fact and absolutely groundless. But every word he used in Chapter was spoken in French, and was utterly unintelligible to those to whom it was spoken and, therefore, useless in so far as the vindication of my character was concerned. Therefore, that every word he spoke in Chapter was true, and that it thoroughly vindicated me was of no use; since it was never faithfully translated into English for the listeners. But now to have it read out to the community in English in this letter, in a form importing that "Every word the Inquisitor used in Chapter did not give satisfaction to this particular religious," meaning myself—implied, and meant to imply, that every word the Inquisitor used in French in Chapter found me guilty. Here is the first false, deceptive, and, to me, utterly and infamously unjust conclusion, to which this dishonest fallacy manifestly leads, and is manifestly intended to lead.

Here is an example that will illustrate the case at almost every point:—A French speaking judge trying Peter for the murder of John decides the case in French. But the case is tried in England, and in the presence of Englishmen, who, with the exception of Peter, the man who is accused of murdering John, and the judge's own Interpreter, do not know a word of French. The judge declares "*Pierre n'a pas tué Jean*," which means Peter has not murdered John; but the Englishmen listening do not know its meaning. Peter, however, understanding French is delighted to hear this, for it acquits him; but then the Interpreter translates the French sentence into English by saying, "Peter has murdered John." Peter is indignant at this, and in the presence of all expresses his dissatisfaction in the strongest manner he can. The Judge now stands up and, speaking in English, and using the very form of words the Inquisitor has here used, says, "I maintain that every word I used in court, even those which did not give satisfaction to Peter, are true." The listeners, remember, did not understand a word of French, when the judge declared that Peter did not kill John, but they did understand the Interpreter's English translation declaring that Peter did kill him, and they saw that these were the words which did not give satisfaction to Peter." What then did the judge's declaration mean in their ears, or what could it mean, but that Peter did kill John, and

what else could it be intended to convey to them? Now this is exactly what the Inquisitor does in this letter. From his own words his dishonesty is manifest and palpable.

IV

THEN under cover of this deceitful double proposition there were contained, as we have seen, several propositions all containing statements that are manifestly false as any listener would have seen if they had been plainly and openly stated. One is that the Inquisitor maintains the truth of the words that did not give satisfaction to me. Now, in addition to all the rest, how could he maintain the truth of these words when he did not understand one of them, for they were in English, and the Inquisitor did not understand English? And does he not show by this that he is a man prepared to testify to facts that he could not know anything about? Another concealed statement is, "The words that did not give satisfaction are the words I used." How, again, could he say that the words that did not give satisfaction were the words he used, when he did not understand the English words that did not give satisfaction? A third statement is, "The words I used in Chapter are the words that did not give satisfaction," which again is utterly false, for it was not his words at all, as he knew perfectly well, that did not give satisfaction, but the English words of his Interpreter.

I turn to one of our school books on fallacies that are used by dishonest rhetoricians and here is what it says; "In all cases an unduly assumed premise (that is the premise or statement which would not be admitted, if clearly stated and deliberately considered) is the more likely to escape detection the longer the argument is, and the more vague and indirect or inverted and perplexed the form of expression is. When this artifice is employed a dull or thoughtless hearer is apt to say, 'There is much truth in what has been urged.' And so perhaps there is in some of it. But there has been introduced into the course of the reasoning a false proposition, and the falsehood of that one proposition would nullify and destroy the whole chain of reasoning; just as a chain is no stronger than its weakest link." (In our case we have three false propositions and only one true one.) "It contributes very much to this kind of deception to suppress the false and unduly assumed premise or statement"—just as we have seen it done—"stating the argument as an enthymeme, expressing the true premise or statement and giving proofs of the truth of it as if everything turned on the establishment of that premise, all the time hiding away the false one. It is like diluting poison in water in

hopes that it may never be detected." This is precisely what the Inquisitor has done by his parenthesis, and then inserting "even those words" into his assertion; and this shows that the untruths in this letter are thoroughly premeditated and deliberate. He maintains and proves the truth of every word that he used in Chapter, declaring me innocent and my accusers guilty; and then he pretends, and he tries to make it appear by his enthymemic fallacy, that it is the opposite and contradictory false proposition, proving me guilty, that he is maintaining. Surely this is false reasoning and dishonest rhetoric with a vengeance.

But the Inquisitor's artful deceit does not stop here; and sometimes I am inclined to think that it is the book on sophistries and dishonest fallacies that John Baptist had studied when a boy, or, perhaps, revised for this letter, that I have come across. For in the paragraph from which I have already quoted, I find the following:

"It often aids the deception to suppress the conclusion itself; bringing forward the arguments which do indeed go to prove some conclusion; and then instead of expressing the conclusion that really does follow, or the conclusion that the speaker had been originally maintaining, the dishonest rhetorician will say 'The inference from this is plain,' or 'I have thus established my point' or 'The position of our opponent is thus completely overthrown,' or he will use some other vague and indefinite conclusion of this kind, but expressed in the strongest and most positive terms." This last is exactly what the Inquisitor has done. After the untruths we have seen, he goes on to pour out his venom on me by pretending to draw the conclusion of my guilt from what proved my innocence, and he does it in this way: "It is useless for me to insist further; I would be utterly unreasonable and a man swayed solely by imagination if I did not yield to the proofs of the evidence that I hold in my hand." There is the conclusion he draws, and it might mean anything. He never tells us at all what the proofs of the evidence he holds in his hands are, or what the conclusion is that they prove. Reading, however, or listening to this letter, would anyone not feel certain that it was my guilt that was proved? This was surely diluting the poison in the water, for the proofs that he held in his hands were the proofs of my innocence and of the guilt and culpability of my accusers, and of his own Interpreter and himself. Here is one of the public declarations of this that he had to make:

"I hereby declare that the charge of violating the seal of confession made at the Bishop's enquiry against Father Isidore, and supported there by the evidence of his accusers" (he gives the names which I suppress) "was false and groundless, and that their evidence was

untrue in fact and that they have authorized me to make public retraction of it in their name." But besides this declaration there are a hundred proofs of this, and some of them in his own handwriting. It is also fully and clearly proved in the Bishop's letters of January 10 and December 28, 1904, given above; and nobody now attempts to deny it.

V

THIS brings us to another point that shows more clearly still the Inquisitor's dishonesty in this letter. Why does he not bring forward his Interpreter to bear testimony to the truth of his own English translation, instead of eliminating him from the case altogether? He does this simply because there are sixty witnesses to prove the falseness of that English translation of the Interpreter. Therefore, the Interpreter and his translation, after doing the evil thing, are hidden away from us for ever. It is like Jekyll and Hyde. The character that did the deed has for ever disappeared. There is not even a hint from beginning to end of the letter that there ever was such a thing as a translation, or such an individual as an Interpreter. Abbot John Baptist is now all in all himself. But, moreover, Abbot John, who did not know a word of English, comes forward to bear testimony to the truthfulness of the English version, by proving that his own version was true; while this just proved that the Interpreter's English one was false. Is the thing not barefacedly ridiculous and absurd, as well as being so unjust and deceptive? If you prove that John did not fire the shot that killed Peter, would that prove also that James did not do it? and particularly in a case like this, where the Interpreter was caught redhanded in the act and convicted on the spot. If this sort of evidence would prove an accused man's innocence, our lawyers are the most foolish men in the world when they go to such trouble to prove the innocence of the accused, while they might do it in such an easy way as Abbot John here does it, that is, by proving that somebody else did not commit the crime. Now what adds immensely to the guilt of this unscrupulous conduct on the part of the Inquisitor was the fact that he was not an advocate pleading a client's cause, but was supposed to be a judge in the case, bound to hold the balance fairly; and, moreover, that all this was being perpetrated by him in the name and character, as he said, of the Pope himself.

Of course, after a little reflection every one at Mount Melleray saw clearly enough through the injustice of this shameless and brazen letter. But at the General Chapter in France and in Rome, where they knew nothing about the facts, it would look all right, and that was all that Abbot John wanted. Such a letter in these places would

have completely pulverized me, and then the "Prohibitions" were expected to save it from exposure either at the General Chapter or in Rome. But after this we very soon smashed the "Prohibitions" into smithereens, and then the calumniator and all his acts stood together fully revealed and everywhere exposed.

All this sophistry and disgraceful conduct that we have been witnessing on the part of the Inquisitor and his Secretary is, however, only another form once more of what, before the rescindment in May, 1905, we saw practised in Rome by the men in the Abbot-General's office, and by the Officials of the Sacred Congregation, when they forged and used the false documents against me, and suppressed the true evidence that proved my innocence; then pretending that it was the true evidence and genuine documents that had proved me guilty. And just as we have seen in the case that ended in the rescindment of May 10, 1905, so here, again, there are no witnesses half so convincing against these men as their own words and their own doings. Otherwise, indeed, the developments that we have seen since the rescindment would assuredly stagger human credibility. Their absurdity and enormity would almost seem to establish their impossibility.

CHAPTER VI

I

THREE-FOURTHS of the members of the community at Mount Melleray were simply horrified at this conduct of the Inquisitor and his Secretary, as we have seen it throughout the whole enquiry. And though none of them could know a tittle even of what these two men were doing, nor at all realize the full measure of their deceitful conduct, yet they saw and understood enough of both to astound and shock them. Numbers of them thought it useless, however, and most dangerous to themselves to attempt anything against them owing to the threats and menaces the Inquisitor had made in the name of the Pope and the Holy See, and owing to the "Prohibitions" he had issued. Some, however, forwarded the strongest protests possible to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, and others to the General Chapter in France. This, of course, was quite useless; because anything sent to either place was sure to be intercepted—as had so often been done before—by the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation and the men in the General's Office, for whom in fact the Inquisitor was doing

all this as their agent. It practically amounted to sending the letters denouncing his conduct to the Inquisitor himself.

But nine or ten solemnly professed members of the community, all priests except one, resolved that in such painful circumstances some effectual steps, no matter what it might cost themselves, must be taken, in order to expose fully to the Abbots of the General Chapter the unscrupulous conduct of the Inquisitor and his Secretary, and prevent the General Chapter itself from being able to carry out its unjust and lawless sentence against me. They, therefore, drew up a full statement of the case; setting forth as far as they knew the whole conduct of the Inquisitor and his Secretary; expressing their deep concern and their indignation at it, and of the unjust and perverse conduct of the General Chapter itself in condemning me, as they had done, unheard, undefended and without either charge or evidence against me, and this after my innocence had been so fully established at Mount Melleray and in Rome; condemning also their conduct in sending two such men as the Inquisitor and his Secretary to Mount Melleray to act as they had done. To this protest they annexed the overwhelming proofs of every charge it contained, and they all signed it.

This was done not solely on my account, but for other grave reasons also. The signatories knew that the French Abbots of the General Chapter were endeavouring to get the rich Monastery of New Melleray in America for themselves and for the monks of their own nationality. They knew, likewise, that the party that was attacking myself and the Abbot at Mount Melleray was backing them up in this, on condition that they in turn were to be backed up by the Abbots of the General Chapter in getting me out of the Monastery and the Abbot deposed; so that they might themselves have full scope and full control of the Monastery and its revenues. All this had been well known in the community for years, and that the attack on me was only the first wave of the deluge.

Instead of forwarding this truly formidable document to the General Chapter in the ordinary way, knowing that if they did so it would fall into Father Symphorian's hands and be suppressed, the signatories forwarded typewritten copies of it to the private addresses of every one of the French Abbots at their own monasteries; so that neither Father Symphorian nor anyone else could intercept the letters. Then no abbot of the General Chapter could plead ignorance; for they registered these letters for personal delivery, as we had previously done when writing to Rome; and they got the "letters of advice" proving the delivery.

II

THE General Chapter was held at Citeaux in France in September, 1906. This was the General Chapter that was to execute on me the sentence that it had passed the year previous, and which was to be now instantly carried out. What did the Inquisitor do now? What did the General Chapter itself do? When at Mount Melleray, saying he had power and authority from the Pope to do it, the Inquisitor had made the most formidable threats and menaces, even of excommunication, against anyone infringing any of his "Prohibitions" or even questioning his acts or words; declaring also that to do any of these things was contempt of the Holy See in his person. Yet here his conduct was designated as shameful and disgraceful, his "Prohibitions" were trampled underfoot, his acts and words were questioned; in the hands of every one of the Abbots, there were not only the gravest accusations against himself and his Secretary, but the proofs that he was guilty of the most unblushing falsehoods; guilty of trying to smother the truth of forcing and suborning men in the name of the Holy See to concoct and corroborate, by false evidence, the most shameful stories that could be imagined, and guilty also of seeking to destroy the peace of the Monastery, by maliciously enkindling and inflaming ill-feeling and evil passions in the community, and then attributing it to me—guilty, in fact, of almost innumerable acts that were outrageously infamous, particularly for anyone in his position.

What then did he do? Did he attempt to deny these things or defend himself? No. He got up and declared that he could make no report against me, that, in fact, it was beyond his powers to make any report at all of the case. And why? Because he would have to report that the trouble and the wrong that was at Mount Melleray originated in the first place from the evil doings in Rome of Father Symphorian, of the Abbot-General and officials of his office, and of the officials of the Sacred Congregation. Their own documents were in his hands to prove this, and he could not get over them. After all his efforts to the contrary, he would have also to admit, as the Bishop and Abbot Eugene had had to do before him, that every one of the charges brought against me were false and malicious; that it was my accusers who were guilty of the things with which they charged me; that they were in a thousand ways the real disturbers of the Monastery and yet had been supported and encouraged in all this by the General's Office in Rome, and the officials of the Sacred Congregation. He would have likewise to admit the gross and manifest wrongs he had done himself, and the misdeeds of his Secretary.

He could not avoid it; he could no longer work out his plans in the dark as he had expected; for there it was, all this, in black and white in the hands of every one of the abbots and there, in their hands also, were the proofs that these things and the wrongs they were intended to screen were the real cause and origin of all the troubles at Mount Melleray. In the statement drawn up by the members of the community above mentioned and signed by them, and which was now in the hands of all the abbots attending this General Chapter, the Inquisitor was challenged to deny, if he dared, any one of the charges they brought against him and his Secretary or any one of the statements they made. If he made a report there was no escaping that challenge. For there, too, in the hands of every one of the abbots were the incontrovertible proofs of it all, and of his own and of his Secretary's unpardonable conduct, testified to by so many priests and religious, every one of them offering to swear to the facts.

And what now about the absurd and ridiculous sentence these French Abbots of the General Chapter had themselves passed against me twelve months before? They had tried me, found me guilty, convicted me, condemned and sentenced me, they had done it against me unheard, undefended and without a single charge or word of evidence. They had then sent the Inquisitor and Secretary to get up a false case against me, and to get false and perverted evidence to sustain it. But all this was to be done in secret, shrouded in the utmost darkness from the world and myself, under cover of the "Prohibitions"; for like all the rest they truly loved the darkness better than the light. The Inquisitor, however, had failed in that enterprise and covered himself and the General Chapter with confusion. All this, too, was now proved, and they had the proofs of it in their own hands and before their own eyes. Dare the General Chapter, then, attempt to execute such a sentence? Certainly not. They would have been ready enough to do it secretly and in the dark, as they had condemned me twelve months before; but they could no longer do that now, and they knew that they could never attempt it again without being fully exposed. Covered, then, with shame they, too, had to retract their sentence. At the same time, I was notified, through the Abbot of Mount Melleray, that all the proceedings against me were now withdrawn in Rome also, as the Inquisitor had failed to find any evidence to show that I was either the cause or the occasion of disturbing the peace of the Monastery. But while the Inquisitor had to do this openly, we shall see, when we come to the trials in Rome, what he was trying to do there in secret and in the dark; where he thought we could never reach him or expose and prove the misdeeds of himself and his Secretary.

III

THOUGH they dare not attempt to proceed any further against me, the Inquisitor and the French Abbots were not, however, to be denied their Roman holiday for which they were assembled, and that holiday it seems demanded a victim. So, seeing that they dare not touch me after the exposures made in the letters sent them, they resolved to sacrifice instead the Abbot of Mount Melleray. They passed, therefore, again in secret, a resolution calling on him to resign forthwith the Abbacy of the Monastery, and deposing him therefrom in case of his failing to do so.

They had no charge in the world against him; for it was known to all that as a monk, a religious and an abbot he had no equal in the whole Order. He had, however, earnestly endeavoured and under the greatest difficulties had succeeded in correcting the gross improprieties at the college with which the men opposed to himself were so much mixed up, and in the correction of which they had tried to oppose him by screening from detection even the most culpable. He had also succeeded in putting a stop to the unnecessary and the irregular and disedifying intercourse between those engaged at the college and the women who frequented the Monastery. He had put a stop likewise at the Monastery—for that was all the length his jurisdiction now extended—to the conduct of the priest and monk, who was coming from Rome falsely pretending to be a fully qualified medical doctor, and under that guise examining and pretending to cure the thousands of women that flocked after him. He had restored perfect peace in the church, by preventing any of them from so improperly interfering in matters there or elsewhere, which in no wise pertained to their offices. As commanded by the regular Visitor in 1903, he had removed from the positions they abused, or had restrained within the limits of their duties and their offices, those who had abused them to the disturbance of the peace of the community, in their intercourse with seculars whether at the college, in the church or at the lodge or shop. By these means he had established perfect peace in the community and at the Monastery, notwithstanding the efforts of the Apostolic Inquisitor in January, 1906, to make peace impossible.

All these things he had a perfect right to do and was bound to do, as Abbot of the Monastery. This is strictly laid down in the rules and laws of the Order, and these rules and laws have the Pope's own authority. Besides, he had done it by order and with the sanction and approval of all his Superiors, both as to his manner of doing it and as to his success. But now when he had done it, and merited

the praise and approval of his Superiors for the manner in which he had effected it, he was deposed from his office under the pretence that it was for doing this that he was thus degraded.

This was all done against the Abbot of Mount Melleray, without giving him any opportunity of defending himself; though he was present at the General Chapter at which it was supposed to have been done, and though he was prepared to meet any charge or accusation they could possibly bring against him. He knew nothing, in fact, about his deposition until their letter deposing him came to the Monastery three months after. Of course, the pretence that he was deposed on the grounds alleged was manifestly false and fraudulent, the very contrary being publicly proved and admitted by the French Abbots of the General Chapter, the men who, a few hours after, were supposed to have secretly decreed the deposition. The fact was that the deposition was decided upon by a secret ring of French Abbots without any grounds or reasons at all for it; and then three months after, when sending it to the Abbot, Father Symphorian, as Secretary of the General Chapter, filled in the pretended grounds and reasons for it.

But what, then, were the real reasons for his deposition? They are clearly seen in the threats and menaces held over his head in the letter of November 13, 1904, from Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General, and particularly in the same threats and menaces in the letter written by the Procurator-General for Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini on the 24th of the same month. It was simply because he had assisted me to prove my innocence, and to expose in Rome the evil doings of these men. It was the Roman vendetta again working now, however, through Father Symphorian and these Abbots of the General Chapter. This will be further proved by a letter that will be produced later on, and by the proceedings at the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908.

IV

To understand clearly the case of the Abbot it is necessary to know that the abbatial authority is a matter of jurisdiction, coming from the Pope through the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. It was, therefore, for the Sacred Congregation to sanction or ratify the sentence of deposition against the Abbot, and then the verdict of the Abbots of the General Chapter—no matter how unjust or illegal it might be, or how it was manufactured—having obtained the ratification of the Sacred Congregation, would have the force of an act of the Pope himself. That the verdict of the General Chapter was an unjust one no one could doubt; but if the Sacred Congregation

of Bishops and Regulars ratified it, there was no remedy. And that, in the name of the Sacred Congregation the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation would secretly ratify it, the Abbot could never doubt for a moment after what he had seen in connexion with these two men's conduct at the trial that ended in my favour in May, 1905, and after all the threats and menaces they had hurled at him for having dared to assist me in securing justice and exposing their doings as seen, for example, in the Procurator's letter of November 24, 1904.

V

BUT besides his deposition from the abbacy, in which, indeed, the Abbot would have gladly acquiesced, there were many other grave questions involved. One of these was that the Abbot had been First Superior or Abbot for over fourteen years, and previous to that for a long course of years he had been Prior of the Monastery. It was during that long period of his priorship and abbacy that the whole prosperity and wealth of the Monastery had been built up and amassed, and almost entirely through his labours and exertions; for his predecessor had left the management of things, and particularly the management of the finance of the Monastery and the correspondence connected therewith, altogether in his hands.

The wealth of the Monastery had accrued entirely from donations given it, amounting altogether to at least three-quarters of a million pounds. The donors had attached conditions to most of these donations, conditions to which the present Abbot in the name of the Monastery had agreed. But he now saw that many of these conditions were in danger of being overlooked or trampled underfoot, or the donations themselves perverted from their proper purpose. He had seen, for example, that there were some members of the community, and some outsiders also, who had been endeavouring to obtain for their friends and relatives or for their favourites and dependents, who were not proper subjects at all, free places at the college, places which had been founded by benefactors for a particular class of students destined for a particular calling. He had had to fight very hard against this abuse in the past. He had had also to correct the abuse of squandering the money which should rightfully go to the relief of distress, and to other charitable objects, in giving entertainments to and in keeping at the Monastery persons who should not have been there at all, and particularly the very persons who were causing the trouble and annoyance at it. He had learned also that some of the essential conditions attached to many donations for masses, that had come to himself or to others through him, were

being overlooked. He knew that the French Abbots had made all arrangements and preparations for taking from the Irish monks the rich Monastery of New Melleray, which had been founded for Irish monks by Irishmen and that had cost Ireland and Irishmen so much; and he knew also that the French Abbots were being backed up in this by the irregular members of the community at Mount Melleray in order to get the French Abbots to back them up in return, in capturing for themselves the positions and the administration of the Monastery of Mount Melleray.

Then there were the irregularities and troubles at the Monastery that we have seen so much of in the earlier chapters; and it was necessary to provide energetically if possible against a recrudescence of these evils. But it was now quite clear after what had come to light in my case in 1904 and 1905, and since that time, and after what we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901, that the real cause and origin of all this at Mount Melleray came through the General's Office in Rome from the corruption that was long festering in the Office of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

The Abbot was resolved to make a supreme effort to get the knowledge of all this, or some of it at least, before His Holiness the Pope, in order that some remedy might be applied to the great evil; and in this he evidently succeeded, to some extent at least; for immediately after the trial the Pope for ever suppressed this Congregation. He now, therefore, on these grounds found himself bound in conscience to appeal against the verdict, or whatever it was, of the General Chapter, in order if possible, by exposing all this and a great deal more, to prevent what was going on; or if he could not prevent it to put himself right in the matter, by doing his part in making fully known to the Holy See what was going on.

VI

THE first ground of his appeal, then, was that he had done nothing but what the circumstances of the case demanded, and what as Abbot he was strictly bound to do by the rules and regulations of the Order and by the commands of his superiors, and that he had done it to the complete satisfaction and with the full approval of all his monastic superiors. The second was that in the government of the Monastery for a number of years, but particularly since the late Abbot-General had been incapacitated in 1904, he had nothing to rely on but his own personal character, and the influence it gave him over most of the members of the community; that when he tried to enforce the rules of the order and the commands that he had got from his superiors and, indeed, in the whole government of the

Monastery, he found that the legitimate power and authority which belonged of right to his office as superior of the Monastery, was taken out of his hands and given to the irregular and disorderly members of the community, who boasted that this was done for them in Rome for money, and on account of the influence that two of their numbers had with the officials of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

The Abbot had other proofs of this, but it was on the facts connected with my case that he mainly relied to drive the nail home against them and clinch it; for no one could deny that the corrupt practices of the General's Office and at the Office of the Sacred Congregation had not only been proved, but had to be admitted on the occasion of the rescindment of the sentence against me on May 10, 1905. The forgery and the falsification and intercepting of letters in the General's Office and at the Sacred Congregation had been proved; and no one could deny that these things were done for corrupt motives, particularly as those who had got them done boasted that it was done for them for money and influence, and no other motive in the world could be assigned for it. I was, therefore, on many accounts a principal and necessary witness for the Abbot.

In direct reply to the charge of unduly restraining the liberty of members of the community, the Abbot set forth in his appeal and defence the scandals with regard to the women who frequented the college, sometimes walking about with the monks in the college grounds, or often with them in the corridors and classrooms long after class hours, and when the place should be closed up and they had no right to be there; that in his absence these monks were sometimes in the habit of having dancing and music for them, while some of those connected with the college and others that he had been obliged to restrain had spent almost their whole time at these sorts of things, instead of attending to their duties; and finally that it was the women associating with them in this way that created all the troubles in the church. So that he had by command of his superiors to put a stop to this intercourse, and that he was now being victimized for doing what he was commanded to do, and what in conscience and law he had the right and was bound by his office to do. Here, again, my evidence and the evidence I had produced at the trials in 1904 and 1905 were essential.

The Abbot's third and final ground of defence was that he was being victimized, because he would not unjustly sacrifice me to save Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and the Abbot-General and his Secretary from being exposed in 1904 and 1905. I was, therefore, on this point also the principal witness for the Abbot; for it was, as we have seen, the evidence in my case that brought the whole guilt home to them.

MONASTIC POLITICS AND THE GENERAL CHAPTER

CHAPTER VII

I

My evidence was now forwarded to the tribunal of the Sacred Congregation through the Abbot's lawyer. But notwithstanding my repeated and supreme vindication by every possible tribunal and authority of the Church and of the Order, and notwithstanding the proved guilt and conviction of every one of my accusers and calumniators, the moment my evidence reached Rome Monsignor Guistini—one of the men convicted in 1904 of forging the report in the Bishop's name and of intercepting the genuine one and the other documents and evidence that proved my innocence in 1905—forwarded to me the following citation. It was sent through the Procurator of the General's Office, another of the men convicted on that occasion, and who had to resign his office on account of the conviction, but was appointed again to his old post by the French Abbots, and returned to his procuratorship in Rome as if he were quite another person. And my whole defence now was to be entirely in the hands and at the mercy of these two men. Here is a copy of the citation:

“ROME.

“*March 2, 1907.*

“Rev. Father,

“At a full meeting of the most eminent Fathers of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, by a decision in Council the controversy about Father Isidore and Abbot Carthage Delanay was proposed; and your Reverence will notify these parties of this and will appoint them a term of thirty days to make their final defence.

“(Signed) PHILIP GUISTINI.”

Of the many strange documents we have come across in the case, this is certainly the most unaccountable. Indeed, as will be seen, it implies a repetition of them all. Besides it pretends to be a citation from the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation, calling me up again for trial, for what the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation itself declared me perfectly innocent in May, 1905, while convicting Monsignor Guistini, who now sends me the citation, of deliberately using

forged evidence against me and of intercepting the true evidence that proved me innocent; and for what in precisely the same way, after their scandalous conduct towards me the year previous, the French Abbots of the General Chapter and their Inquisitor had also to declare me innocent in September, 1906, this being only five months before. And this is done without there being one item of new evidence against me.

But this is not all. It purports to be an appeal by the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation against their own decision, and an appeal by the Cardinals of that tribunal to themselves again. Surely there is no other case on record to equal this. Every one of these circumstances makes the citation absurd and ridiculous, and what follows makes it far more so.

The Secretary says in the citation that the most Eminent Fathers in full council, which means all the Cardinals, have ordered me to be brought up again for trial. We demanded, however, the names of these Cardinals, pointing out that we could not be expected to accept the Secretary's bare word on the subject after his conviction in the case in 1904 and 1905. We demanded also to be informed who the persons were that were bringing the appeal against me? But in neither case would any name be given; and in 1910 when I consulted them in Rome these Cardinals indignantly denied having ever known anything about this order. But it turned out in the course of the trial that it was the men in the General's Office, whom I had convicted, that were secretly bringing the appeal, and that they expected also to be my sole and legal representatives in the trial of the appeal. What could surpass all this for absurdity and injustice?

The whole transaction was simply a continuation of the treacherous game these same men were found guilty of playing against me before their conviction in May, 1905. And as I have shown from their wording of the rescindment on May 10, 1905, and more especially from Father Symphorian's letter of the 11th, and from what we have seen since at the General Chapter in 1905 and at the Inquisition at Mount Melleray in January, 1906, it was plain also that from the moment of their conviction these men had intended to have their revenge in this way.

II

BUT why do Cardinal Farrata and Monsignor Guistini dare to do what we see them now doing in opening this new campaign against me, for they knew that there was superabundant evidence to prove their own guilt and conviction, and the guilt and conviction of their associates, as well as to establish my innocence? There were

many reasons. The first was that they expected that it was now to be a Star-Chamber business, where neither myself, nor lawyer for me, nor witness, nor evidence of any kind was to be admitted—nothing but the evidence against me that had so often been proved and declared to be so false and unfounded. The thing would be incredible only that we have still the evidence to prove every tittle of it.

In the first place this citation would bring me back into the case with the Abbot (making both of us accused men in the same case), and then neither could I give evidence for the Abbot nor could the Abbot give any evidence for me; so it would practically make all oral evidence, as they thought, impossible for both of us. Then Abbot John in January, 1906, had carried away all the documents I had relating to my case in 1904 and 1905, including the rescindment of the sentence of May 10, 1905, and the declaration made by the Sacred Congregation of my full vindication, and of my complete innocence, as also its declaration that proved the guilt of the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary, and of the General's Office in suppressing the Bishop's letter and using the false and forged one instead of it. In Rome they, therefore, thought that I had no longer any document to prove this. In this expectation, then, they now bring me up again, as if there had been no trial by the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation in May, 1905, and no declaration then of the falsehood of the charges brought against me and of my innocence, nor any vindication at all of my conduct nor condemnation of themselves.

The next reason was that it was *viva voce*, instead of in writing, that the French Abbots of the General Chapter had given their decision in September, 1906, declaring that they must now annul the sentence they had so illegally passed against me the September previous, because there was no evidence to prove that I was either the cause or the occasion why the peace of Mount Melleray was disturbed, nor to prove anything else against me. It was Father Symphorian's duty to supply me with a written copy of this decision in my favour; but this he never did, just as he tried in his letter of May 11, 1905, to withhold the rescindment of the Sacred Congregation in my favour on May 10, 1905. As this then was only *viva voce* and not in writing, and as they expected in Rome that the Abbot could not or would not give any evidence of it, they thought that they could still secretly use against me in Rome the false sentence that the Abbots of the General Chapter had given against me in September, 1905, without trial, without proof and without my ever knowing that there was any charge against me—that they could use it and make it appear a verdict of guilt and a just and legal

sentence, as if it had been given after a full and fair trial and as if it had never been annulled.

But they had a third reason for bringing me up again for trial, with the full hope and expectation that I could make no defence whatever at this new Star-Chamber enquiry, and for thinking, therefore, that they could now use against me whatever evidence and whatever statements they chose without any danger of being detected. It will be remembered that the Apostolic Inquisitor in 1906 promised and pledged himself to afford me an opportunity of pleading my case in person in Rome, and of giving and producing there all my evidence against them. But the Abbot-General now refused to give me any permission to go to Rome to do this; and the only other possible way of even partially doing it was through an advocate there; while they knew that I had not one halfpenny, nor dare the Abbot of Mount Melleray give me a fathoming for the defence. Therefore, there would be nobody in Rome to speak even a word for me; I should be absolutely at the mercy of the General's Office, and the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation in their Star-Chamber proceedings.

Now here is where their first mistake lay, and this is what upset the whole of their new campaign against me. One of the party opposed to me at Mount Melleray told this to Mr William Cummins, who was then stopping at the Monastery; boasting at the same time that I was now beaten at last, and could make no defence in Rome, because I had no money. Mr Cummins was a resident in the Monastery and knew all about the campaign that had been carried on against me, and the moment he heard this he at once sent for me to say that he would supply me with ample funds to fight them, no matter how much it might take. Their third great expectation founded on my want of money was, therefore, the first that failed them.

I now procured a lawyer, Count Sacconi, a Count of the Papal Court, and the Abbot had another, for he had a right to this; and our cases, therefore, became henceforward quite separate and distinct instead of the two being only one, consolidated and decided under one heading, as would have occurred if I had not succeeded in securing a lawyer and advocate in Rome. I have still the letter of the Abbot's lawyer proving this. The two cases being now separate and distinct, it followed also that I could give and produce evidence for the Abbot, and the Abbot could likewise do the same for me; so that we could in this way get all the proofs and facts before the Sacred Congregation.

I have said that they thought in Rome that I had no longer any documentary proofs to show that my complete vindication and

innocence was established, both before the Sacred Congregation in Rome in May, 1905, and before the General Chapter in France in September, 1906, because the Apostolic Inquisitor had seized and carried away all my papers, as they thought, in January, 1906. But the Abbot had original copies of almost the whole of them, and was able to prove to the contents of the rest, and to prove also my complete vindication before the General Chapter. Therefore, the whole of their schemes and plans had now completely broken down in my regard; and we were once more in a position if we got any fair play at all to refute fully and to disprove every charge they could possibly bring against me.

III

BUT these men in Rome were still determined that there must be no fair play in the case, and that nothing must stand in the way of their revenge. To effect this, however, they had now to adopt new schemes and new tactics, for the old and ordinary ones had already been exhausted.

Their next attempt was to snatch a conviction against me by not giving me one moment even for preparation, nor any opportunity whatever of making any defence; while making it appear that they were giving me every opportunity and full time to prepare.

Though the case commenced in the beginning of March, and though the Abbot's lawyer, as we shall immediately see, was able to give him the pretended charges and the pretended evidence against me in March, yet I could not get one word about them until December 1st following, and then the case was to be decided on the 14th of that same month of December. This I learned from the Abbot's lawyer; for, as we shall see later on from his letters, my own lawyer dare not write me a word on the subject. But no evidence would be received in the case unless delivered fourteen days before the decision; so that this would not give me one moment to make any defence. It would not even give me time to write protesting against not being given any time or opportunity to defend myself. I was again in this way to be condemned undefended, and unheard, just as in June 1904, while they had documents to make it appear that I had nine months for preparation and a lawyer in Rome to represent me. Moreover, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had now only to add to this new false sentence of condemnation the two Latin words "et Amplius"; and then if I were to keep writing to the Day of Judgment, and if I were to employ all the lawyers in Rome to plead for me, I could never get the sentence

reversed or the case even re-opened. They had now used all the formalities, technicalities and legalities that were necessary to make it "a res judicata" a case that was finally judged and closed for ever. This was surely a masterstroke that would have struck me down completely and hopelessly for ever.

But I was now pretty well versed in all these tricks of their chicanery; and knowing what was going on I telegraphed at once to my lawyer telling him that I knew it all and directed him to protest against it and withdraw at once from the case, unless ample time were given for my defence; and that I would go out and expose the whole affair publicly. Then to avoid this they had to give me full time to make my defence. They were thus baulked in their second attempt to use, again in secret, the evidence and the forged documents that they had used in 1904, and the trumped-up and perjured evidence that the Apostolic Inquisitor had forced some of the members of the community to give in January, 1906, and which was already retracted by these members.

I now proceed to show how it came to pass that I was able to upset them in their next attempt; and while showing this a great deal more will come to light that will help to guide us a long way in the case. It is practically the same old hunt as in 1904 and 1905, only that the circumstances of the chase and some of the sportsmen are considerably changed.

MONASTIC POLITICS AND ABUSE OF ROMAN PROCEDURE

CHAPTER VIII

I

THE lawyers who were permitted to plead before this Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars were either priests connected with it, or laymen who, for the most part, were admitted thereto on account of their connexion or influence with some of the cardinals or monsignors. But in their capacity of lawyers before the Sacred Congregation they were all looked upon as officials of it, and as such subject to the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary, and bound to do whatever they directed; and to do nothing in the case without their permission. Letters proving this will be produced.

Now while my lawyer was bound on oath to let me know nothing, the Abbot's lawyer, as we shall see, let his client know a great deal about the case, and the Abbot, for reasons that will appear, let me know it all; so that I was practically looking into the Cardinal Prefect's and the Secretary's hands all the time that they were playing their little game, as we shall see it developed in what follows.

To come then to more particular details. The moment they had discovered in Rome that I was now in a position to fight them to a finish, they sent word to the Abbot of Mount Melleray that the case against him would be entirely withdrawn if he would undertake not to back me any further. They knew, as seen, that in my case at least he could prove all that had gone on; moreover, they mistakenly suspected that it was he that enabled me to employ a lawyer against them and that, therefore, I could go no further in the case if the Abbot withdrew from me.

The men at Mount Melleray, who had opposed the Abbot and were in league with these men in Rome, now went to him and told him that if he would do this against me they in return would get the case against himself withdrawn in Rome. This, as was manifest, could only have come from Rome from the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation. This was all perfectly well known at Mount Melleray. The Abbot at once told it all to myself, while it was proved on oath in the course of the subsequent trials.

While this was going on at Mount Melleray, the Abbot received from his lawyer in Rome a secret letter that he was to show to nobody,

but to burn at once. This letter was practically to the same effect and proving the same thing. But it showed, moreover, that the Prefect and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation, while suppressing all the evidence in my favour, were still secretly using against me the forged evidence they had used in 1904 and 1905, as well as the trumped-up evidence of the Inquisition of 1906 and, indeed, all the other evidence which had been retracted, and which, as they knew, had been so often and so overwhelmingly proved to be untrue. The Abbot looked on this secret letter to himself as a clear indication that his case was betrayed, or rather that it would be betrayed unless he did as the letter required, that is, betray me; which he could not do in conscience, and would not do for any consideration. He said nothing, however, about this to the lawyer; for though he could no longer have much trust in his services as an advocate, he intended to use him in order to get all the information he could.

The Abbot at once gave me the letter that I might use the information it contained for my case, without in any way letting it be then known from what source the knowledge came. I have the original letter still; and it is marked "Confidential," winding up as follows:—"When you have read this I beg of you to burn it on the spot, and to let me know your opinion about the proposal." I, therefore, give only what bears directly on my case.

The letter commences:

"I have seen the evidence in your case at the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and here is my impression from reading it. As you know, the enquiry conducted by the Bishop of Waterford, though resulting favourably to Father Isidore, yet confirmed the numerous extravagances this father was guilty of even in the church with regard to confessions. What has really injured your authority and your prestige has been the protection you have given (I speak freely, you see) to such a person as Father Isidore, whose extravagances, whose strange way of living, and whose abnormal mental condition are superabundantly proved; mature reflection, aided by some of the exemplary monks of your community, will convince you of the necessity of providing energetically, even by radical changes in your community, so as to avoid the renewal of the scandals of which Father Isidore has been the case, and the gravity and frequency of which cannot be concealed. You see I give you advice though more than two thousand kilometres from you. But the distance, and the very numerous and very important documents I have seen, only give more weight to this advice. You cannot at all believe the consequence of taking any part whatever on Father Isidore's side.

"A little voyage to Rome on the occasion of this trial would not be disagreeable to Father Isidore I should think; and this would benefit your case very much and confound your adversaries."

With regard to the last sentence the lawyer wrote immediately after that, as I must ask leave from Rome for permission to go there to give my testimony, the Abbot must take the greatest care when so doing not to let it be known; that it was he who had so advised, for that this would be most fatal. It is certain, then, that the lawyer made this suggestion himself unknown to the Prefect and Secretary, for, as anyone can see, it was quite contradictory to what had gone before. But with regard to the rest of the letter, the Abbot already knew from one of the members of the community at Mount Melleray that he was to receive this letter or one to the same effect from Rome, and knew in the main what the contents would be, and that it was practically prepared and dictated from the General's Office and from the Office of the Sacred Congregation. Indeed, the letter itself shows this.

The letter, likewise, shows clearly that under another form, adapted to the changed circumstances of the case, the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation, as well as the men at the General's Office, were again pursuing exactly against me the forged evidence in 1904 and 1905, and suppressed all the true and genuine documents and evidence. The secrecy of the letter made us aware also that the lawyers in Rome dare neither oppose nor expose them in this; that it was only myself that could venture to do it if I got an opportunity of going to Rome to give my evidence and present my own case. But when I applied for the permission to do this, that had been promised and pledged to me by the Inquisitor in 1906, it was the Abbot-General, as I have already said, that replied refusing and threatening excommunication from the Order if I attempted to go to Rome. I have still this letter.*

* Here is the letter:

"TO FATHER ISIDORE,
"MOUNT MELLERAY,
"IRELAND.

"May 14, 1907.

"My Dear Father,

"Your letter of May 6 reaches me in Spain, where I am making the Visitation of our monasteries. It is impossible to allow you to go to Rome, and it is not useful. You have your lawyer to represent and defend you; that is sufficient.

"If you go even, I officially warn you that you will not be received in any of our monasteries.

"† F. AUGUSTIN,
"Abbot-General."

Now I had no lawyer in Rome until long after this letter was written. The Abbot-General wants to make it appear that the lawyer who wrote the secret letter to the Abbot was my

The threat to the Abbot shows, moreover, that they would now allow no one they could prevent to give any evidence in my favour. And this was further proved by the fact that neither the Bishop of Waterford nor Abbot Eugene dare now, when I applied to them to do so, give me any report of their various enquiries that so completely vindicated me. I have still Abbot Eugene's letter showing this. They had thus, they imagined, everything perfectly arranged to secure themselves from detection; particularly as the Abbot as yet had given them no indication whatever of the line he intended to pursue.

II

WITHOUT, then, letting my lawyer know from what source I had the information I wrote to him saying that I knew that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini were using all this evidence against me, forwarding to him at the same time the documents and evidence that refuted the charges and allegations contained in this secret letter; also insisting that all this should be put before the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation which, of course, I knew that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini would not permit; but I was resolved to have a record and proofs of the fact that I had done so.

We now come to the contents of the letter and to the proofs by which I exposed and refuted the statements and allegations. Here in the very first place we have the forged letter of the Bishop of Waterford again secretly used by the very same persons who had been openly convicted of doing it in May, 1905. The lawyer says:—"You know the Bishop's enquiry confirmed the numerous extravagances that Father Isidore was guilty of even in the church with regard to confessions. But here is what the judicial decision of the Sacred Congregation declared on May 10, 1905:—"His Lordship the Bishop of Waterford, in his letter of July 31, 1904, but presented to this Congregation in the present month of May, 1905, states that after having made formal Inquisition, and taken more accurate information, it has resulted to him that all the accusations against Father Isidore are false." Here they are all false without a single exception or distinction—"all the accusations." But now we have it secretly and confidentially in a letter that I am never to see, and that is to be

lawyer, who was to represent and defend me; and that again shows the sort of justice they intended to give me. Then my rejection from the monasteries in Rome, as here threatened, would cause me to be excommunicated from the Order there, and would brand me as an apostate from it, if I went to Rome. The date of this letter is somewhat antecedent to some of the things we have been narrating above; but it is at this point that its significance is best seen, for it shows that I was to be absolutely at the mercy of the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer.

burned on the spot, that I am found guilty by the Bishop of "these extravagances even in the secular church with regard to confessions," the very things and the only things that constituted or could constitute the subject matter of the Bishop's enquiry.

III

I WANT to leave no loophole here for this cowardly lie. The expression is "the extravagancies even in the secular church with regard to confessions." Now the Bishop in his letter to myself of December 28, 1904, already given above in full, says regarding this enquiry:—"In explanation of the fact that I did not send my report to Rome until July, 1904, I ought perhaps to mention that I held the investigation in discharge of my duties, and in exercising the rights of my position as Bishop of the diocese to examine all the charges made against a confessor of seculars acting as such, whoever he might be." In other words, into "the extravagances and all and every one of the extravagances that might have been committed by me in the secular church with regard to confessions." He examined them all, and the evidence was on oath, and we are told that he found them all false without a single exception. Where, then, can anyone possibly find a single loophole for even one of the "extravagances committed by me in the secular church with regard to confessions?" For these were not only the things examined by him, but they were according to the Bishop himself the only accusations against me that he could examine as Bishop of the Diocese. As Bishop he had no jurisdiction or authority over me with regard to anything else. If ever, then, there was a lie left without a loophole, this was one of them. Nor could it be said that the Bishop had changed his opinion; for it was not the Bishop, but the Bishop's same letter; and letters do not change their words or meaning; "*Littera scripta manet*," unless indeed there be a forger at work. And again if the Bishop secretly changed his statements in this way, his word was worth nothing. No sophistry could get over this. But besides this Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had the Bishop's private letter to myself in their hands, in which he was compelled by me to declare that he had found me absolutely innocent of every charge and allegation they had brought against me, and that he could do nothing else after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so. What could go beyond this?

It is not necessary to heap proofs upon proofs that this statement was deliberately false. But there are other proofs of the fact that it

was so, some of which I cannot pass over as they will let us see more clearly the manifest dishonesty that was at work in the matter.

I was a confessor of seculars, and I always had from the Bishop all the special faculties of the diocese of Waterford, faculties which the priests only of the highest standing and probity had. How, then, could the Bishop himself approve of my being a confessor in the public church, and give me himself these very special faculties, if I were guilty of these "extravagances," and guilty "in the church with regard to confessions?" And particularly how could he stultify himself by writing to the Sacred Congregation that he was approving a confessor who was proved on oath to be guilty of these extravagances—a confessor who was, in fact, stark mad according to this letter? Why he could do it, only if he were as mad as this letter represents me to be. How, too, could he after the rescindment of the sentence against me on May 10, 1905—for then, at least according to this letter, he must have known that I was mad—how could he, I ask, immediately write approving me as a confessor, and again giving me all the special faculties of the diocese as a confessor in the very church where I was committing these "extravagances" with regard to "confessions." And how could he continue this approbation, and those special faculties down to the moment I left Mount Mellera three years after—how could he do it when he knew all the time that I was stark mad?

It must be remembered that all these were positive episcopal acts belonging exclusively to his rights and duties as Bishop. They were quite independent of the Sacred Congregation, as he had told us himself in his letter of December 28, 1904. It was his duty, then, as Bishop of the Diocese, to have me instantly removed from the confessional if I were guilty of any single one of these extravagances in the secular church with regard to confession; and it was a duty that he could not get over. Moreover, after having secretly carried the accusations to Rome for them in 1903, and after having secretly testified and done all he could against me previous to the enquiry in January, 1904, if he could have found any excuse at all for it at the sworn enquiry, would he not have been only too glad to report to Rome that his sworn enquiry had proved that what he had reported to them was true, particularly as he could have done it secretly and unknown to me, as he had carried the false reports for them before the enquiry?

But there is worse still. The Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation in its letter of May 10, 1905, which I have quoted above, compels the Abbot-General and the Bishop to renew my faculties and to re-establish me as a confessor in the secular church; where according

to this secret letter they knew that I was guilty of these "extravagances" with regard to confessions. That letter of the Sacred Congregation of May 10 says:

"In view of the fact that all the accusations against Father Isidore are false, this Sacred Congregation finds no difficulty in revoking whatever it decided in its hasty note of June 29, 1904, concerning the aforesaid Father Isidore as well with regard to his removal to another monastery as with regard to his faculties as confessor." Then it says:

"This is brought to the knowledge of your Paternity in order that you may communicate it to the most Reverend Abbot-General for his guidance and his government." "For his government" is added specially, in addition to the usual formula in such letters from the Sacred Congregation, and signifies a command to the Abbot-General—a strict command from which neither he nor any one else had any power in the world to deviate one iota. It leaves no liberty to him or to anyone else to withhold from me the faculty of confessor in the public church. And nobody from that day to this has ever attempted to take the faculty of confessor in the public church of Mount Melleray from me. Now how possibly could the cardinals of the Sacred Congregation have done this if the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry, on which they were acting, declared that I was guilty of "these extravagances in the secular church with regard to confessions"; if, in fact, according to the letter of the lawyer, I was shown in the Bishop's report of that sworn enquiry to be stark mad? How could the cardinals have done this unless, indeed, they too were stark mad themselves? And were the cardinals stating a falsehood when they asserted that all the accusations against me were proved to be false?

But the Roman lawyer says to the Abbot "You know these things to be true." This was the same form of expression as that used by the Abbot-General's Secretary on November 13, 1904, when the Abbot knew that every word the Secretary was writing was utterly false, and we shall soon see that it had here exactly the same signification.

The Abbot testified on oath that he knew the very opposite, that is, that the Bishop had to decide, and even in spite of himself to declare to the Abbot and to me also in the letter marked "Private" of December 30, 1904, that letter which the Inquisitor in January, 1906, had forcibly seized and carried away—had to declare that there was not one tittle of truth in any of the accusations brought against me, and particularly in the accusation of being guilty of any extravagances in the church. And what was perhaps still more to the point the Abbot knew and testified that the Bishop had to write to

myself, "that he could do nothing else but declare me innocent, after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so"; and also that the Bishop in spite of himself had been compelled by me to make the same declaration to the Sacred Congregation itself, on July 31, 1904, as we have seen from the words of the rescindment.*

But independent of everything else there are two very simple things that make this secret statement about the Bishop manifestly false and ridiculous. The first is that if the Bishop had now made the statement in secret, after the public declarations of my absolute innocence that he had been compelled to make openly, then his word would be utterly unreliable and worth nothing. The second is that after we now detected them trying to use this false evidence in the Bishop's name there never, as we shall see, was one word more from them about it. When we dragged the thing into the light of day this falsehood disappeared.

Now what did all this about the Bishop's enquiry finding me guilty of these things mean, seeing that there was such overwhelming evidence, clear as daylight, to prove it such a manifest and brazen

The retraction of July 31, 1904, was by no means the only one that the Bishop of Waterford was compelled to make, as the wording of the rescindment by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini on May 10, 1905, would make it appear. It was on December 31 following that the Bishop sent to Rome his fuller and more complete retraction to the last and smallest item of all the false stories he had conveyed to Rome against me for my opponents.

In December, 1904, I had already learned that the Bishop had conveyed these false stories to Rome, and that they were not yet being retracted there, almost twelve months after they had been so fully and so overwhelmingly refuted and disproved at his sworn enquiry on January 6. I now—in December, 1904—notified the Bishop of this, pointing out that I had still the full and overwhelming proofs of my innocence that I had produced at the sworn enquiry, and that I would use them against him unless he took more decisive steps to have full justice done me in the matter in Rome. It was then that he wrote me the letter marked *strictly private*, in which he declared that he could do nothing but declare me innocent after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so. Then when I wrote to him that I would use this private letter even to prove my innocence unless justice were done me, I received the following:

(*Private*).

" BISHOP'S HOUSE,
" JOHN'S HILL,
" WATERFORD.

" January 19, 1905.

" My Dear Father Isidore,

" My letter of December 30 was written solely for your personal satisfaction, and as I have written to the Holy See as therein indicated, I should wish that letter to be still regarded as *private*.

" Faithfully yours,
" † R. A. SHEEHAN."

Now this letter of December, 1905, to the Holy See has been suppressed or destroyed at the Office of the Sacred Congregation. This was, of course, because it so completely proved my innocence of the alleged "extravagances as a confessor in the secular church." What a system! and how difficult it is to follow these men in Rome through their secret labyrinthine wriggings!

falsehood? Surely there must be some reason why they dared attempt to do such a thing in Rome. Yes, there was a reason and more than one reason. The Inquisitor in January, 1906, had, as we have seen, seized on and carried away with him what he believed to be all the papers I had bearing on the subject of the Bishop's enquiry, and proving what I have here stated. This was one of the principal things that he aimed at. He had even sent his Secretary to ransack every corner of my room in the Monastery lest there might be anything left that would prove my innocence. So they thought he had all my papers and that they could now say whatever they pleased without fear of being detected and contradicted. Nor dare the Bishop now give either to myself or to the lawyer, or even send through his representative in Rome, the Rector of the Irish College, any new report of his sworn enquiry that so thoroughly vindicated me. The Bishop, who had himself some difficulties in Rome, knew well that, like the Abbot of Mount Melleray, his doom was sealed if he attempted to give one word of evidence in my favour against the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation. So they thought that in Rome they could now use in secret and with perfect safety whatever sort of report they chose in the name of the Bishop, just as they had done it in 1904 before I had caught and exposed them. And that they were now doing it again, this secret letter proved. The statement that the Bishop had found me guilty of anything was, therefore, an undiluted falsehood, and they knew it. But they knew also from what he had done in the past, that the Bishop was a thorough partisan of my opponents, and they still thought they could secretly and safely use his name against me in this way in Rome as they expected that there could be nobody there now to watch my interests.

In all this, however, they were thoroughly deceiving themselves; for having seen their conduct in the past and having known all about what had been done in this matter in 1904, we had taken good care, as I have already said, to provide ourselves with sufficient and overwhelming proofs of the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry, showing that I was proved to be absolutely innocent of every charge ever brought against me. And, moreover, as we have seen, instead of being deceived by the promises held out to him or intimidated by the threats and menaces held over him, the Abbot of Mount Melleray despised them. Treating them with the contempt they deserved, he now swore that he knew not only from what he heard from the Bishop himself, but also from the letters that passed between the Bishop and myself—every one of which he had read—that I had compelled the Bishop to acknowledge the unfounded falsehood of every charge and allegation, down to the smallest tittle, that had been

made against me, even the utter falsehood of the charges that the Bishop himself before his sworn enquiry had carried to Rome for them. And now we see that it is these men in Rome themselves that have fallen into the deadly trap they had laid for me. But what a terrible idea all this gives us of these men, and of the secret Star-Chamber system under which they can lay such plots and do such things.

CHAPTER IX

I

BUT there are many other astounding revelations in this secret letter. Having dealt with the Bishop's report of his sworn enquiry, the lawyer mentions the scandals of which I am alleged to have been guilty and the gravity and frequency of which cannot be concealed. This, of course, means that these scandalous things about me have been made public and notorious. He then adds that my guilt and the notoriety of it are proved by the very great number of most important documents which he has seen at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

Now, what does all this mean, for it does seem to be a most formidable indictment? It is simply the wretched stuff we saw so overwhelmingly disproved in the first part of our narrative. It was just like the suppression of the Bishop's genuine report of his sworn enquiry in 1904 and 1905, and the use of their forged one to make me appear guilty.

II

THE real key to its meaning, however, is found in Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901. We see there what these very formidable documents that were so numerous at the Sacred Congregation turned out to be, when they were submitted to examination at Mount Melleray. "There is nothing new to me in these denunciations," Abbot Eugene writes, "which are absolutely the same as those formulated by the same individuals two years ago in letters addressed to Rome, which letters your paternity sent me in order that as Immediate Superior I might investigate this matter; and formulated also in letters addressed to myself from Mount Melleray; where they asked me to make the Visitation and hold the Inquisition as soon as possible, in order to judge of matters on the spot. In one of these letters the father who was the principal author and instigator of the combined attacks on Father Isidore, and who knows

Rome and the Roman Congregations well, threatens to make so many accusations against him, to return so often to the attack, and to continue so persistent in making them, that the judges in Rome from whom he seeks to obtain the sentence, tired out with his persistence, will 'for peace sake' accord to him the condemnation and removal of Father Isidore from the confessional and the Monastery." This simply means that falsehoods proved and acknowledged to be founded on calumnies and slanders are quite as effective in Rome as truth if you have money and influence there, and know how to manipulate them. And the boldness with which this boast was so often made at Mount Melleray shows how unblushingly this base traffic is carried on in Rome.

"Then," continues Abbot Eugene, "I made the Visitation and enquiry, and I heard the parties. Abbot Stanislaus, who accompanied me, and who knows well this father who made the accusations, was able to judge as well as myself; and both of us judged and decided that the accusations of this father first, and then of the other confessor and of the many others who were instigated and inspired by these two fathers, had no foundation at all. We have only found groundless assertions without any proof, and even the groundless assertions were expressed in exaggerated language that was not at all inspired by charity, but by envy, pride and jealousy and by other evil motives." Then he tells us that this father who makes these false charges against me, and these boasts of being able to get me condemned in Rome on false accusations, is himself the cause of the trouble and of the disorder and scandals of which he accuses me, and that I am absolutely innocent and only the victim of their pride, their envy and their jealousy, and of their accusations that were springing from these motives. He tells us also that the principle on which they were acting was:—"We can denounce and calumniate Father Isidore, if that succeeds in Rome we shall have gained our case; if it does not succeed we shall be nothing the worse for it, and we can commence again."

This was in 1901, and this report was in their hands at the office of the Sacred Congregation, for it was made to the Abbot-General and he forwarded it, as he was bound to do, to the Sacred Congregation, and it covered every single one of the accusations against me.

In 1904 and 1905 Father Symphorian was again compelled to admit before the Assessor of the Holy Office, and in his letters of January 17, 1905 and June 23, 1904, to the Abbot of Mount Melleray and myself that Abbot Eugene, their Official Investigator, and Abbot Stanislaus White, his assistant, and every one who had ever investigated the truth or falsehood of their many charges, had

always and in everything found me absolutely innocent and my accusers guilty. The Bishop's sworn enquiry proved the same thing. The Sacred Congregation itself had to give the same decision and make the same declaration in their rescindment of May 10, 1905. Abbot John, when confronted with the true evidence at the General Chapter in France in September, 1906, had to admit the same, and that every one of the stories that he himself and his Secretary had sought to rake up against me, were now again proved to be utterly false and malicious, and without a shadow of foundation or excuse.

Now, to lay aside for the moment the innumerable and overwhelming proofs we have seen in the earlier chapters,* the decisions and declarations just quoted rendered it absolutely impossible that there could be one tittle or even a shadow of evidence against me in Rome. For there never was any other enquiry or inquisition whatever in the case, and there could be none without my knowledge; while evidence of my guilt could only reach the Congregation through such an enquiry or inquisition. But now after this what is to be thought of what we have seen in the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer, where he tells us that the men in Rome have piled up against me in the Office of the Sacred Congregation numerous and most important documents pretending to find me guilty of such grave scandals? What can it mean but that these men in Rome are once more using against me the false stories which have been so often proved and judicially declared to be so unfounded and so malicious. What can it possibly mean but that they are again secretly doing what they did, when in 1904 and 1905 they used the false report in the Bishop's name to prove my guilt, whilst suppressing the genuine one that proved my innocence. And it is the very same men who did this in 1904 and 1905 and were convicted of it, who are now doing it again. But they are now doing it in a way which they think can never be detected, for they imagined they were doing it all in perfect secrecy. Neither, indeed, could it ever have been discovered, only that this secret letter came into ours hands. For from the letter itself we see that I was never to know anything about it, nor have any opportunity of defending myself against them, and that the Abbot was to be struck down and victimized if he dared to raise a finger to protect me or prove my innocence.

And does the lawyer's own statement, that my presence at the trials in Rome would completely disarm my adversaries, not prove the same thing? For what does it mean but that I could at once prove that all this evidence they were now piling up against me was already proved and declared and known by them to be so unfounded?

* The proofs will be reproduced at the trials in Rome in 1907-8.

In no other possible way could I alone thus disarm them. But in this way I certainly could, for the evidence proving it all was before me in Rome.

But, like the false report in the Bishop's name, the best proof perhaps of all this dishonesty is that the moment they found we had discovered their plot they withdrew these charges and every word and line of these documents, which they pretended to be so numerous and so important, and to afford such superabundant proofs of my guilt, without giving me any opportunity of exposing and refuting them. For why should they have done this only that they knew they were so untrue, and that it was already proved that they were so? Nor, indeed, after using them thus against me had they now any legal right to withdraw them. But they withdrew them in violation of law and justice to prevent us from exposing their present guilt as well as their past. This, too, was another act of treachery to save themselves and their convicted accomplices at Mount Melleray in the business. So that, if we try to probe their conduct to the bottom, we find that their guilt is everywhere almost unfathomable.

Now, all this clearly proves for us what has been stated in the first part of our narrative, namely, that when my adversaries were proved at Mount Melleray to be false accusers and found guilty and convicted there of the things with which they charged me, in order then to screen and save them from the punishment that was their due according to the laws of the Church, the manifold proofs of all their guilt were withdrawn by their accomplices in Rome. And now many years after we see that their stories and slanders and false evidence, for which they were convicted, are all being used again in Rome against me; and that, though proved so often to be quite innocent, and the victim only of their malice, I am now to be punished in order to conceal their crimes. This is what the lawyer's secret letter clearly reveals, and what the men who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations always boasted that they could get done at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on account of money and influence.

III

THERE is, however, in this letter from the Abbot's lawyer one new charge against me—one, I mean, that was not specifically mentioned in any of the other letters from Rome, for we have heard it before at Mount Melleray. It is contained in the sentence where he says that "my extravagance, my strange manner of life and the abnormal conditions of my mind are superabundantly proved." This, of course, if it means anything, means that I am insane; and we have

already seen the stories with which they were trying to prove this false charge against me from Mount Melleray.

He tells us here, however, that there are very numerous and very important documents proving it. The first question is where are these very numerous and important documents and these superabundant proofs? Let us have some of them at least, that we may examine them and see their authenticity. Surely after what we have seen we have a right to demand this, because mere gratuitous assertions of this kind if they had no foundation, and particularly if they spring from envy and hatred or from pride and jealousy, prove nothing unless, indeed, as Abbot Eugene says, the unscrupulous falsehood of those who make them; and we have already frequently seen that this is particularly so in the present case.

The second question is where did these extraordinary charges originate and who were the originators and propagators of them? These questions are asked because the answers to them will demonstrate once more the downright treachery that was at work both at Mount Melleray and in Rome.

We have seen how they first originated from my convicted calumniators on the occasion of my simple profession so long ago as 1895; and we saw then how mean and malicious they were when my accusers who first originated them were convicted and had to publicly withdraw them, and then publicly acknowledge their falsehoods in the matter and beg pardon and forgiveness for them, while still carrying on their campaign of calumny and slander in secret. Then we have seen the other absurd stories of my insanity that were circulated everywhere, and through every possible channel from the Monastery among persons who never knew me: such, among dozens of others, were the unfounded tales about my asking and forcing people to come to confession to me; my beating and abusing people in the church, because they would not come to confession to myself; my peeping through the keyhole of the door for fear the penitents would go to other confessors; my scolding and lacerating with my tongue the penitents who came to confession to me; my shouting at penitents in the confessional—penitents that were not there at all, and when I was not there either; the equally false stories of the bottles of whisky and brandy, and of my compelling people to go to Communion twice on the same day and after breakfasting; then the truly tragic narrative of my having been thrown down a flight of stairs on my head, and of my brain being so seriously injured that I had to be frequently shut up in a lunatic asylum, before I went to Mount Melleray at all, and a full and lengthy catalogue of the same sorts of things, too long to be repeated here.

These were all proved to be most unfounded and unscrupulous calumnies. Yet here we learn from this secret letter that in Rome, in order to have their revenge, they are still using in secret against me all this rubbish, now decking it out anew as if it were all true and genuine; while suppressing the clear and acknowledged proofs of its detestable malice and falsehood which they had in their own hands. And we have it also in this letter that they intend to convict me in secret on the strength of it; while the Abbot of Mount Melleray is asked to join them in this conspiracy, and is threatened with the direst consequences if he does not do so. Thus every step in the case brings new revelations of more treachery until there seems to be no end of it. This charge of insanity will once more turn up in a new guise at the trials in Rome in 1908, and we shall then have a still fuller opportunity of exposing its astounding malignity.

IV

IN view of this monstrous letter from the Abbot's lawyer, it was now necessary to bring the guilt home to the officials themselves in Rome, because this letter, as well as Abbot Eugene's letter and all that we have seen done in Rome in connexion with the case, proved clearly that it was there the real root of the evil lay; while these same officials were always pretending to seek for it elsewhere, in order to keep suspicion and proof of their guilt away from themselves and their associates.

We, therefore, now produced against them all the proofs of the forgery of which they had been convicted on May 10, 1905, together with the sworn evidence that refuted every one of the charges contained in the secret letter. And in order to make their guilt and their motives clearer still, several witnesses now testified on oath that the persons who were so often convicted at Mount Melleray, at the General Chapter, and in Rome itself, constantly boasted that they could get these things done in Rome; and that they could do whatever they pleased at Mount Melleray in defiance of the Abbot, and against him and those supporting him; because of the influence they were able to exercise with the officials there through the chief disturber at Mount Melleray, mentioned in Abbot Eugene's letter as knowing Rome and the Roman Congregations so well, and through the other father who was pretending to be a medical doctor, and who was bribing, as they boastingly asserted, the officials in Rome with the money he was getting from the many women he was pretending to cure. Besides the many other witnesses who proved this, the Abbot testified that the pretended doctor himself boasted in his

own presence and in presence of the Abbot of Roserea, that he could get whatever he desired done at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on account of the generous donations he was giving the officials there.

The evidence already given shows clearly enough what these officials were unlawfully shielding, screening and even encouraging in connexion with the convicted men at Mount Melleray who, in defiance of the Abbot and in violation of all discipline, law and order were giving so much trouble and causing so much scandal at the Monastery.

But with regard to the pretended doctor who was the living link between the men in Rome and their confederates in Mount Melleray, I must reluctantly give some further details, and one of the many sworn declarations of which twenty at least were now forwarded to Rome, to show what it was that the officials of the Sacred Congregation and the General's Office were permitting in his regard at Mount Melleray and elsewhere, and even encouraging and screening from detection. For they had all along full knowledge of it, and many complaints about it from various quarters, and knew also that he had been frequently condemned for it by many authorities and in more than one country. I do not, however, give the worst cases, because they are, for many reasons, altogether unfit for publication. The sworn declaration regarding these things which I give was made by the procurator of a monastery where the pretended doctor had spent a few years, and where he had carried on the practice of examining and curing women, the same practice that he was still carrying on for nine months of the year under their eyes in Rome itself, and for three at Mount Melleray and in other parts of Ireland and elsewhere. Every word that this declaration contains was corroborated by the sworn testimony of two other members of the same community, and by that of a secular priest of the neighbourhood and of two lay witnesses, one a professional gentleman and the other a lady, and then by the official report of the Vicar-General of the Order, who had held an exhaustive investigation into these matters. This declaration is chosen from among many others, all of which I still retain; because it affords a good general outline of the practices carried on by this pretended doctor.

Here it is:

“ I hereby testify that the Reverend Father——during the years that he was at this Monastery spent the greater part of his time in the practice of medicine for seculars, and especially for women. He often went more than twelve miles to visit his patients; and in the after-

noon he was occupied in treating those who came to the Monastery, who may be of any number from ten to fifty a day. On this account he was often absent from the regular exercises of the community. In the City of D——, twelve miles away, he had a house appointed where he attended regularly and to which a great many women came to be treated by him. Sometimes he spent hours at that practice in the lodge after the community had retired to rest for the night. That practice particularly gave rise to unfavourable remarks in the community, and excited the displeasure of secular priests and medical doctors, who more than once threatened to prosecute him for meddling with women under their charge.

“ Besides these things the following are the periods of his absence from the Monastery, for four of the years that he was here.

“ In the first of these years he was absent four months and fifteen days; in the second, three months and eight days; in the third, two months and twenty-six days; in the fourth, six months and twenty-five days.

“ (Signed) FATHER D. S.,

“ Bursar and Procurator.

“ (Sworn in the presence of) A. M. B.,

“ Notary Public.

“ Signed and Sworn on April 3, 1907.”

To pass over his conduct, as a pretended doctor through the country districts and towns of Ireland—where, coming from Rome, he spent most of his summer months in the same practices at various religious houses and convents—we limit ourselves to a brief account of a few of the things he did at Mount Melleray; for though necessary in order to expose the conduct and motives of these men in Rome, the subject is very far from being either an edifying or an inviting one.

In secluded places at the Monastery and for the most part, *solus cum sola* with barred or locked doors, for years, when he came to Mount Melleray, he carried on, in despite of the Abbot, the same practices that are described in the declaration given above. For until the Abbot at last mustered up courage and had these secluded places locked against him, he pretended to have permission and authority for all he was doing from the Abbot-General and the Sacred Congregations in Rome, which I need not say none of them could give.

Now, when this secret letter that we have seen, accusing me of being the scandal-giver, arrived at the Monastery, ten solemnly professed members of the community testified to these facts, to the great scandal all this had caused at the Monastery, and that his

patients, daily numbering from 100 to 150 and sometimes 200, were almost all women and girls. Together with this evidence, the Abbot also forwarded to the Sacred Congregation the official reports of the Regular Visitor proving the same, and proving that they knew it all in Rome, but condoned and screened it there. Thus, instead of my being the great scandal-giver, as the secret letter pretended, it was their own accomplices as they knew, and especially their own agent, who caused it all.

V

THE charges contained in the secret letter, as we have seen and exposed them, were those on which I was now to be secretly condemned, as the lawyer's private letter also shows. While, of course, I never suspected that anyone would have had the temerity to bring against me any such charges after being so often overwhelmingly proved, and officially and judicially stamped and branded, as false. In order, however, to screen once more their own guilt and that of their accomplices and agents, all these charges together with this mass of evidence that proved their guilt were at once withdrawn by the men in Rome; and Monsignor Guistini, as we shall see, set about secretly formulating against me a new set of equally false, but more vague and indefinite, ones; inventing also other new schemes and plans for circumventing my secret condemnation. But this secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer, which was to be burned on the spot, must for ever remain as a terrible revelation of the things that were being done at the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. For just as Abbot Eugene's letter did it for us on June 12, 1901, this again traced the origin of all the evil to the officials there, while the enormity of what they were doing would be quite inconceivable without this secret letter.

CHAPTER X

I

THE next plan the officials of the Sacred Congregation adopted was not to allow my lawyer to give me one tittle of information about the case, or about the charges and evidence they were using against me, which might enable me by refuting both to make my defence and to expose them and their accomplices at the General's Office and at Mount Melleray; for they now knew that this was what we were resolved to do. The second and subsidiary one was to prevent the

Pope from knowing anything about what they were so secretly doing, for this was another of the things they dreaded. With these two things well and safely secured, they thought they could then freely do whatever they pleased in the case; and the present chapter and what follows will show how they were doing it.

On May 17 my lawyer wrote me as follows:—"I intend to have an understanding with the Abbot's lawyer, perhaps he can give me the charges against you and the evidence supporting them. I will write to you again after having seen him; and then I will ask for explanations and evidence from you if they are necessary."

But the Abbot's lawyer, who, as we have seen from his secret letter, knew all the charges and evidence they were using against me from March 27 previous, dare not give them to my lawyer or else my lawyer dare not give them to me; for on May 28 I received the following from him: "I have agreed with the Abbot's lawyer to see Cardinal Ferrata in order to obtain from him all the documents without reserve, and all the charges against you. This is the reason why I have not sent you the letter that I promised you in order to give you exact details of the whole affair from the foundation. I expect to be able to give you full knowledge of the case from the foundation the first days of next week."

Besides what these letters prove otherwise, this letter shows that I had an absolute right to the full knowledge of their charges and their evidence against me, for he here speaks of my right to know all the facts of the case from the foundation, and all the details without reserve. Of course, in addition to this, that knowledge of the evidence and of the charges was my right according to Canon Law and the procedure of the Roman Congregations. It is also, as anyone can see, of the very essence of justice; for there could be no fair trial regarding overt acts that admitted of proof and disproof without the accused knowing the charges and evidence against him, particularly when I was not getting an opportunity of being present at the trial. And no power on earth can annul God's eternal law of justice.

But notwithstanding my right to know the charges and evidence, and while I had not as yet received one word of information from my lawyer about any of their charges, or any of the evidence they were using, the news comes to me in the month of July that the lawyer himself had been compelled by Monsignor Guistini to take an oath of secrecy not to let me know anything about the case except what he permitted.

The lawyer writes in the middle of July: "Next week they will give us the charges against you, but we had to take an oath of secrecy to the Secretary. The Secretary says, however, that he will permit us to let you know the accusations they make against you."

But they had in the meantime learned that I could refute them all with the most overwhelming and damaging evidence against themselves and their confederates, for I had already forwarded most of it to my lawyer; and the more damaging the evidence I sent the stricter grew the oath of secrecy. Therefore, on October 9 the lawyer writes again:—"In accordance with the oath which I had to take, I cannot now even send the summary of the accusations to you. I can now do nothing without the Secretary's permission and authorization."

All this simply meant that they were inventing their charges and their evidence against me. Otherwise, why the delay and secrecy, when they pretended, as we shall see at the trial, that all the charges had been made and proved against me at Abbot John's Inquisition in January, 1906, almost two years before I got them?

On December 7 following the lawyer again writes: "The oath of secrecy which I have had to take prevents me from telling you anything about what is contained against you in the report of the Inquisitor of January, 1906, or about the documents sent in by him, or about the evidence for or against you in the offices of the Sacred Congregation."

Here is another thing that makes this vitally important. In my letters to the lawyer I insisted perseveringly on my right of knowing whether the documents proving my innocence and the falsehood of their charges and evidence against me—such, for example, as the Bishop's letters of July 31 and December 31, 1904, giving the report of the sworn enquiry, the reports of the Inquisitions made by Abbot Eugene and Abbot Stanislaus, the numerous letters and documents proving my innocence that were carried away by the Inquisitor in January, 1906, the retractions of the false evidence that the Inquisitor in January, 1906, had forced some of the members of the community to give against me, and almost countless other documents proving the falsehood of their charges—I insisted, I say, on my right of knowing whether these documents were still in evidence in my favour in the Office of the Sacred Congregation, as they should be, unless wilfully purloined or destroyed. And now, what shows clearly that these proofs of my innocence were really either intercepted or purloined by these men in the Sacred Congregation or by some one for them, is the fact that my lawyer wrote to me to get from the Bishop and Abbot Eugene new copies of the reports of their enquiries. This certainly proves that they were intercepted or purloined, otherwise there would be no necessity for getting them again. And in both cases when I applied for copies to the Bishop and Abbot Eugene they dare not give them now without an order from the Sacred Congregation, which again Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini

would not give. In the same way I had to get re-sworn for my lawyer every word of the evidence that we had forwarded to the Sacred Congregation and to the General's Office in 1905, proving my innocence and the guilt of my accusers and calumniators and of the men in Rome. And every word of this evidence in my favour was bound to be preserved at the Office of the Sacred Congregation unless unlawfully done away with; so that while we have the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer proving that Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and the General's Office were using against me what they knew to be false and forged evidence, we have my lawyer proving here that they were unlawfully intercepting or purloining the true and genuine evidence that proved me innocent; exactly, and in every respect, a repetition of what we saw them convicted of doing in May, 1905, only that it was now far worse, for they thought they had every one bound on oath to secrecy about it, and that, with their "Prohibitions" at Mount Melleray and their "Et amplius" in Rome, they could never be detected.

Here is another statement received from my lawyer at the very time when Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini were, as we shall see, concocting their decision against me, just as they did it on June 25, 1904: "Unfortunately the oath of secrecy that I have had to take in the case prevents me from even being able to let you know what evidence I have had here, and what evidence I have been able to give in the case."

But the oath of secrecy did not end here. When in Rome in 1910 I again engaged this lawyer, to appeal to the Pope and put the whole matter before him, in order that His Holiness might permit me to bring the case before the Tribunal of the Signatura, where I could hope for full justice and reparation. On June 28, 1910, all was arranged between the lawyer and myself for this appeal to the Pope; and on the 29th the lawyer wrote to me, where I was staying in Rome, to send him all the documents necessary to complete this appeal as he intended to make it at once. I immediately did so, and the appeal was now ready. There was only one thing wanting, which was that the lawyer should get released by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini from the oath of secrecy, in so far as to enable him to put the facts before the Pope—and before the Pope only, for I was to have another lawyer for the tribunal of the Signatura. On June 30, to my amazement, I received the following from the lawyer: "They" (Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini) "will not free me from the oath of secrecy" (even with regard to the Pope). "And I find that the oath of secrecy is now so binding that I could not undertake to lay the case before His Holiness."

This would be utterly incredible were it not that I have still the documents to prove it, for nothing in the world would justify them in imposing this oath of secrecy with regard to the Pope. This was another presumptuous act of crude illegality, and affords a fresh revelation of the unlawful means by which these officials keep the Pope in utter ignorance of the things they do.*

It was through the letter to the Pope, as we have seen, in the end of 1904, and the consequences that followed from it in 1905, that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini were compelled to produce the Bishop's report of his sworn inquiry, which they had intercepted for nine months because it proved my innocence; compelling them at the same time to acknowledge that the report with which they pretended to prove my guilt was false and a forgery. But now we could not get a line or a word to the Pope. They, therefore, felt themselves perfectly safe in that direction also to do whatever they pleased. So that though they had failed to bribe or intimidate the Abbot of Mount Melleray with their oaths of secrecy, with their intercepting of evidence at Rome, and with their "Prohibitions" at Mount Melleray, they still thought they could do whatever they pleased, and that they were perfectly safe from detection.

II

I now proceed to give the charges against me, as I got them from my lawyer in the beginning of December, 1907, when they had it arranged to have me condemned, as already seen, on the 14th of the same month without giving me the least opportunity of refuting them or making any defence whatever, or even of protesting against their practices; just as they had done it on June 25, 1904. This was one of the things in which, however, owing to the information we had from the Abbot's lawyer, we were able to completely countertrap them in Rome. Having thus secured the charges from them, they could no longer now condemn me without some sort of trial; nor could they now withdraw from trial and investigation these charges and allegations, as they did with regard to those contained in the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer. This, therefore, no matter what they might do, gave us an opportunity of proving their falsehood and of exposing their whole conduct.

Here are the accusations:

(1) You have given proof of a defective character even as a secular priest in the Diocese of Armagh, where you had difficulties with the

* The extraordinary details in this case will be seen when we come to the account of my visit to Rome in 1910.

Bishop on account of a contribution, given according to the constitutions of the Diocese, by the priests who resign their mission, which you did not want to pay.

(2) Even during your novitiate you caused trouble by thinking that you were not thought enough of, or sufficient attention paid to you for the singing.

(3) You are opposed to Father M. because he would not divide with you the confessions of the little girls, who were preparing for first Communion.

(4) You employed persons who are strangers to the community, particularly the Aunt of Father T. and one Miss M., to get your information from them.

(5) You watch your penitents with anxiety for fear they should go to other confessors rather than to yourself, and you reproach them with it even in the church.

(6) You prefer to hear the confessions of women; sometimes you send the men away, particularly the poor.

(7) You have used injurious epithets, even when conversing with seculars, to those in the community that you believed opposed to you, and you have suspected them of plotting to turn penitents from your confessional; you have even threatened to incriminate them before the Lay Tribunals.

(8) You dispense yourself from the Choir without sufficient reason; and in 1904, when you were prevented from hearing confessions, you remained almost always in bed, only celebrating Mass fifteen times in a year almost; and that in view of a malady which was imaginary rather than real, because it ceased immediately after you had the power to hear confession.

(9) You have failed in obedience in not coming to the session of the closing of the Visitation.

Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, as well as the men in the General's Office who got up these charges against me, knew that every one of them was false and without a shadow of foundation. They had, in fact, before their eyes the fullest possible evidence showing that they had all been proved to be so more than a dozen times by witnesses and evidence that could admit of no doubt. Moreover, their own representatives, Abbot Eugene and the Bishop of Waterford, after most minute and searching investigations, had declared them absolutely false and utterly malicious. They had also themselves in May, 1905, decided and declared them to be so; for the decision given on that date covered almost every one of them. And what remained, the charges, for example, of my conduct as a secular priest and in the novitiate, even if they were true—and we

shall soon see they were not—either did not come under their jurisdiction in the case at all, as being before my profession; or as in the case of part of the eighth and ninth charges they were added at random to the others without any foundation or any possible proof of any kind, but merely to make the thing look more complete and formidable.

What follows, then, will not be a mere refutation of the charges, but a full and complete exposure of their schemes and plottings throughout, both at Mount Melleray and in Rome. In a very special manner it will demonstrate the guilt of the men in Rome and of Abbot John, their Inquisitor of January, 1906.

CHAPTER XI

I

WE now come to the exposure and refutation of the charges. With regard to the first, here is the evidence of the Right Rev. Monsignor Byrne, Dean and Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Armagh, as forwarded to the Sacred Congregation:

“DUNGANNON, CO TYRONE,
“IRELAND.

“*December 11, 1907.*

“My Lord Abbot,

“I am much surprised to find that Father Isidore Mooney, formerly a secular priest of this Diocese, has been charged with a want of obedience to the statutes of the diocese in reference to the division of parochial revenues, when leaving the secular mission to enter religion.

“I understand perfectly the whole circumstances of the case, and he certainly had a grievance owing to the enactment of a new statute in our Diocesan Synod: and yet he submitted to the decision of His Eminence at once, on being informed of the correct reading and interpretation of the statute above referred to.

“I have known Father Isidore from his ordination, and he has always been a most exemplary priest and an edifying ecclesiastic.

“(Signed) P. J. BYRNE, P.P., V.G.,
“Dean of Armagh.”

Here also is that of His Eminence, Cardinal Logue, which was also forwarded:

“ARA COELI,

“ARMAGH.

“December 10, 1907.

“My Lord Abbot,

“Father Isidore has submitted to me certain charges which were made against him in Rome. Of these charges, as far as they concern what is alleged to have taken place in the Monastery, I, of course, know nothing. The only charge of which I can speak is of the allegation that Father Isidore raised difficulties about money matters when he was leaving the Archdiocese. This charge is easily explained.

“Shortly before he left the Archdiocese, a synodical law was made changing and regulating the distribution of income among the priests. Though the change was necessary, still it involved a loss at the time to some of the priests. Among these was Father Isidore who was deprived of a share of a parochial collection to which he would be entitled under the old arrangement. He thought he was entitled to retain his portion of the aforesaid collection, and there were others like him who did not understand it at first on its becoming law. However, after he left, the then Lord Abbot (Bruno) sent me a sum of money to arrange the matter. Hence this is a charge which should not be brought up against Father Isidore, and I am far from being edified by finding this charge being raked up after so many years.

“For the rest I can testify that Father Isidore left the archdiocese of his own accord, free from all censures as far as I know, and that during his whole time on the mission he was a very active missionary.

“(Signed) MICHAEL CARDINAL LOGUE.”

These letters surely dispose sufficiently of the first charge; and that was all they could find against me in my life of eighteen years as a secular priest. I may say, however, that Cardinal Logue only knew me for a short time: and that is why Monsignor Byrne deals more fully with my life as a priest and ecclesiastic, for he knew me, as he says, from my ordination.

I should state with regard to this charge, that it was concocted by the Apostolic Inquisitor of January, 1906, out of my own private notes which he had fraudulently seized and forcibly carried away. For neither my accusers nor the Inquisitor knew otherwise, anything about the one fact that he mentions here, and then so violently tortures in order to make that innocent fact appear as a proof that my mind even as a secular priest was always wrong and defective.

The fact was that the Synodical statute had to be modified in accordance with my interpretation of it, as it was found that it would otherwise violate distributive justice.

The original proof, as we have seen, of my brain being wrong and defective as a secular priest, was the utterly unfounded but skilfully concocted story that it had been injured by my being thrown down a flight of stairs on my head, and that I had therefore been several times insane and in the asylum. But when they had been convicted of this and had to publicly withdraw it, then to conceal their guilt in the matter, the Inquisitor himself invents this new one about my defective character and my refusal to pay the contribution, in order to take the place of the old one; trying with the same stroke to shield and save my convicted calumniators and to ruin me. It is now, however, on themselves that the double stroke recoils; showing again that the Inquisitor of January, 1906, who was pretending to hold the balance fairly in the name of the Pope, was nothing but an accomplice of my slanderers, and that he was himself one of the very worst of them. The cumulative proofs of his treacherous conduct throughout are irresistible.

II

THE second charge is as follows: "Even during your novitiate you caused trouble by thinking you were not thought enough of, or enough attention paid to you for the singing."

This was the same charge that my two accusers brought against me at my simple profession fifteen years before, to show that I was insane, and that I had proved my insanity by expressing these thoughts to Brother Paul. They then deliberately testified in secret, as we saw in the very first chapter, that Brother Paul had told them so. But not only did Brother Paul then prove that the charge they made against me, and that what they said with regard to himself was absolutely unfounded, that the whole story was a fabrication of their own, and that the testimony they had given to support it was utterly untrue; but that he had always considered me one of the soundest-minded men in the community. The doctor testified also that he always regarded me as "a living rock of common sense." The two accusers had then to admit publicly that the whole thing was a wretched concoction of their own, and admit also the untruthfulness of the evidence they secretly had given against me, when they thought the matter would never be investigated.

Several witnesses now swore to all this; yet it was this false and retracted evidence that the Apostolic Inquisitor was secretly using

in Rome against me, thinking it could never be discovered there. This again shows how fraudulent the Inquisition in January, 1906, was: for why did the Inquisitor not permit me at that enquiry to refute this charge? Why was it that he never said a word about it at Mount Melleray where I had at least sixty witnesses to refute it? And the Inquisitor knew this, for he had the documents in his own hands that proved it.

And, moreover, in 1889 and 1904 this charge had been proved before the Sacred Congregation itself to be false; and on both occasions the Sacred Congregation had decided that it was so: and then it is the Sacred Congregation that is now supposed, through the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary, to be bringing it up once more against me.

But why did Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini and their Inquisitor of 1906, knowing all this as they did, venture now to bring it up again? The same question may be asked, and the same answer given with regard to every one of these charges. They had two reasons. The first was that they thought to intimidate the Abbot of Mount Melleray to join the conspiracy against me, as seen in the lawyer's secret letter, and this would have prevented me from proving anything in the matter or procuring any evidence whatever. Then they had sent these charges to me on the first days of December, and I was to be found guilty of them all, and condemned on the 14th, without getting any opportunity of defence. After this they had only to add the two Latin words "Et amplius" to the sentence of condemnation; and once these words were affixed thereto, I could never more until the Day of Judgment get one word before the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation or any other tribunal in Rome. I was to be secretly condemned, and "Et amplius" was to double-lock every door against me.

But this well-laid scheme had now failed; and brought face to face with the facts and to the test of them, what proof was there to sustain this charge against me? Was there any new evidence or was there any proof at all? Not a word. But besides the former overwhelming evidence of my unimpeachable character, conduct and dispositions as a novice, there were now many other positive proofs of this. Those who were present at my profession thirteen years before, now swore that on that occasion of the votes being taken for my profession or rejection after my novitiate, every single member of the community who was present in the Chapter Room, except the two convicted defamers, had testified in the highest degree to my character and conduct as a novice, and especially to the edification I had given by my earnest endeavours to learn the singing and

chanting of the office in choir, in order to be able to perform my duties properly; that over twenty members of the Chapter voted for me at my profession, while my opponents, though they employed every possible stratagem against me, were only able to get two to vote with them.

But the charge now demands a little further exposition in order to show from what it had originally sprung. Here, then, is the incident on which it was founded, and from which it originated. When I was a novice, among others there were two young novices along with me in the novitiate. Contrary to the Rules and Regulations of the Order one of the two men who brought the charges against me at my profession had these two novices almost constantly in the room with himself. This gave great disedification and dissatisfaction in the Monastery, for they had no business there. This Father, who used to have these novices in his room, went to the music master of the novices, Brother N——, and ordered him in the name of the Abbot not to teach me the Gregorian Chant, for that it was believed that I was to leave the Monastery and never be professed; but that his whole time and attention must be devoted to the other two novices, and that this was the order of the Abbot. The music master resented this improper interference with his duties; and knowing well that it did not come from the Abbot, he complained of it to the Abbot himself. The Abbot told him to pay no attention to what this father said, and that he himself would correct him. The father had, therefore, to retract the command he had given not to teach me the chant. Now, I had never known anything about all this until the Abbot proved it on the occasion of this case in Rome, for this is what lay at the bottom of the whole charge. If, however, they had got me now secretly condemned, the condemnation would not only have removed the grave records that were against the father for this, but would have placed him on a very high pinnacle as a martyr who had been wrongfully condemned and had patiently borne it for fifteen years. And this sort of thing runs through every one of the accusations. Throughout they were trying to kill the two birds with every stone, to condemn me secretly and to shield and screen my accusers, because they were their own accomplices both in my case and in opposition to the Abbot. This father who was thus convicted was, in fact, the bosom friend of one of the men in Rome, who, as they boasted at Mount Melleray, was manipulating the whole affair for him.

But now, when all this was proved, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini withdrew this charge and all the evidence bearing on it, as they had also withdrawn the previous one; in order that the knowledge of their own misdeeds, and of the misconduct of their confederates at Mount Melleray, might never be brought to light.

III

THEN comes the third charge: "You are opposed to Father M——, because he would not divide with you the confessions of the little girls who were preparing for first Communion." This is another case exactly like the previous one, and had reference to the same person. It is also a case that I have given already. This father that I am now accused of being opposed to, compelled the little girls preparing for first Communion to leave me as their confessor, and to go to one of the other confessors; and then caused me to be accused in Rome of doing what he had done himself. The children could not make satisfactory confessions to the priest to whom they were compelled to go for confession, and their parents complained to the Abbot of this coercion of the children with regard to confession; some of them also complained in letters sent to me, which came through the Abbot, and were read by him. There was, as seen in an earlier chapter, a full investigation into the case—not at my instigation at all, but at the instigation of the parents and others and, moreover, because I was accused in Rome of compelling these children to come to confession to myself. The case had, therefore, to be investigated; and this father, who had prevented the children from coming to confession to me, was then found guilty of impeding the children's free choice of their confessor—a thing he had been specially forbidden to do—and of making confessions impossible for many of them. He was also convicted of disobeying the orders of his superiors who had forbidden him to interfere in these things. He was found guilty, moreover, of accusing the teacher of having done what he had been doing himself, until she cleared herself; and then he had to admit it was his own act. As already seen, the clear proofs of all this were in the Office of the Sacred Congregation but suppressed there by the officials.

But this trial in Rome led to further very grave disclosures. It led, among others, to the revelation of the fact that this father, in violation of his vows, was going to the girls' school and meeting women and girls there, and on the way to it; and that this was done contrary to the strict laws and rules of the Order, and without any permission from the Abbot. But without a word of proof of anything against me, all this, and all the opposition to me that this father had shown in the matter, and that I had pardoned and, indeed, almost forgotten, was after so many years turned now into a subject of complaint against me, and into a crime on my part, that is, that I must be opposed to him on account of it. This was one of the cases in which Abbot Eugene declared that these men were accusing me of the crimes they committed themselves. So that the case was now proved

against this father, not only by the testimony of many witnesses, but also by overwhelming documentary evidence, and by the official report of the Regular Visitor.

Besides all this, how were these men in Rome able to go into my mind and tell my motives for being opposed to this father, particularly as they had not a single fact to prove any opposition on my part to him, save and except that in my regard he had been so often convicted of such wrong-doing? Does the very fact that they pretended to read my mind and discover these evil motives in it, and make them such a serious charge against me, not show the spirit with which they were animated? And could they not make me guilty of anything if they could punish me for my motives in this way, without showing that I was guilty of any act? So that, turn the matter which way one may, nothing can be seen in it except dishonesty and deceit.

IV

Now comes another class of accusations. The fourth charge is: "You employ persons, strangers to the Community, and especially the aunt of Father T. and one Miss M., to get information from them."

Every one of their agents at Mount Melleray, particularly the pretended doctor who was going from place to place examining women and pretending to cure them of all their infirmities, and then bringing back with him to Rome enormous sums of money he had got from these people—every one of them had been over and over again convicted at the various enquiries held at the Monastery; and the proof of this was against them in Rome. The end and object, therefore, of this charge was to make their convictions appear a great crime on my part, as if I had obtained the evidence against them in some illegitimate way. But to start with, if they used outsiders to manufacture what was proved to be such false evidence against me—and, as we have seen, this was proved at every one of their enquiries—how then could it be any crime on my part to procure true evidence to clear my character, even if I had to get that information from outsiders, since they were using outsiders against me? On the face of it, what could they mean by it in such circumstances, but that I must make no attempt to refute their charges and evidence; seeing that in many cases it was through outsiders it must be done, and that to attempt to get evidence or information of any kind from outsiders must be reputed a great crime on my part. This, too, was what Abbot John tried to do at the Inquisition in 1906, when he by his "Prohibitions," forbade me and every one of my witnesses to write to,

speak to, or communicate with anyone on the matters in dispute, thereby endeavouring to prevent me from ever even attempting to refute any of the false evidence that he was amassing against me.

But the fact was that from the day I entered Mount Melleray fifteen years before, up to the day when all these charges were made against me, I had never spoken to any secular at the Monastery, nor held any conversation with anyone outside the confessional. And according to the laws of the Church, no penitent in the confessional could be accepted as a witness against a confessor about questions of this kind that he might ask. The reason of this law is that the confessor, being unable to defend himself owing to the seal of confession, it would be evidently unfair to accept the penitent as a witness against him in such a case. Therefore, leaving everything else aside, it was absolutely impossible that there could be any evidence whatever against me to sustain this charge. All this was proved at every investigation held at Mount Melleray; and these proofs were in the Office of the Sacred Congregation in Rome.

But the names of two witnesses are actually given here. The first is the aunt of Father T. But she testified to the Sacred Congregation that she had never spoken one word to me in her life, either in the confessional or outside it. The second is Miss M., and Miss M. testified also that she had never spoken to me outside the confessional, nor had she been at confession with me for five years, which would carry us back behind the time of the occurrences about which I was supposed to have sought the information. Besides, she testified that I had never sought any information from her about anyone, and that she had never given me any information or spoken to me about anything save to make her confession. Where, then, could the evidence come from to sustain this charge? Of course, there was no evidence. It was all another piece of fraud and forgery. Every case shows that they were themselves inventing the false evidence against me.

This one is just the same as that of Mrs O., where they swore that she had gone to confession to me, and told me in confession what had occurred between the father and certain women and girls in the shop, and that I had violated the seal of confession by telling what she confessed to me. But Mrs O. testified that she had not gone to me to confession and had never in her life spoken to me on any such subject, and that she had never said to anyone that I had done so. And here we have the same thing over again with regard to Miss M. and the aunt of Father T.

The Inquisitor, Abbot John, in January, 1906, knew all this; knew, in fact, that I had never asked or got information from anybody outside, and knew that the overwhelming evidence that was before

him, in the shape of the letters and documents that he had carried away, had all come through the Abbot or that it was the sworn testimony of the members of our own Community. But when he saw this in January, 1906, he refused to examine the case at Mount Melleray, saying that this was not the sort of thing he had come for. And now under the false names of Miss M. and the aunt of Father T. he uses against me the false evidence and forged letters of the brother at the lodge, which he had promised to burn. For this was part of the evidence which, at the Inquisition of January, 1906, he had promised me to burn, namely, the false evidence that pretended to prove that I had sought and obtained from outsiders information concerning numbers of the community. The fact, then, that the Inquisitor was now bringing this charge and this evidence against me shows clearly that he expected I should never get any opportunity of refuting and exposing it, while he was again turning the oft-proven guilt and convictions of my accusers into a reason for punishing me, by pretending that I must and did get the evidence that proved their guilt in an illegitimate way. And now when they are caught at the evil work, this charge like the rest, is withdrawn, thinking thereby that the evidence proving and exposing these things, that we have seen, as well as the unscrupulous conduct of the Inquisitor himself, would be thus for ever cloaked up and hidden away.

V

THE fifth and sixth charges were always proved false by the same evidence, and are besides so closely united that both go together. They are as follows: "You watch your penitents with anxiety, for fear they might go to other confessors; you get angry with your penitents if they go to other confessors, and you reproach them vehemently for it even in the church. You prefer to hear the confessions of women, and sometimes you send the men away, particularly the poor."

The dishonesty with which the Prefect and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation and their Inquisitor of January, 1906, were acting, was particularly proved in the case of these two charges, and proved in many ways. These were overt acts, which, if they ever occurred, as they did not, admitted of proof and refutation. But there was neither proof of them given nor any date when they occurred, nor the names of any person to whom I had done these things, nor any act to show that I had ever done them. Why, following this mode of procedure, they could easily have found me guilty of murder, arson, robbery, or anything they pleased.

But the rules of the Roman Congregations, the Canon Law and

common sense itself, says that in such cases, unless the proofs and the name and the dates be given, the accused must be declared innocent of the charges. It must be shown, as the Cannon Law says, that the "*Corpus delicti*," the definite crime, is committed by somebody before any one is even put on trial for it. For without the crime there cannot be even a *prima facie* case. And surely that is common sense, too. Would it not be a strange thing to try a man for murder and find him guilty of it, when there was no murder nor anything at all like it committed? But here we have neither fact nor date, nor name, nor anything save empty charges resting on nothing whatever.

But this was not all. The men in Rome had, moreover, sent Abbot John to Mount Melleray in January, 1906, to seize and carry away all the copies, as he thought, that I had of the documentary evidence, and of the official reports of the various enquiries by Abbot Eugene and the Bishop, proving me absolutely innocent of these very things, and proving even the impossibility of their being true. And Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini and the men in the General's Office had these documents in their possession, and were now unlawfully intercepting and holding them back. And these documents had not only proved me innocent of every one of these things but, as we have seen, in Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901, and in the many documents and other proofs given in the earlier chapters, they proved the guilt and conviction of my accusers in the matter, and that they themselves were committing these very things of which they were accusing me. This, of course, is the reason why the names and the facts and the dates are withheld, because these would show who the real culprits were.

In the next place these charges were nothing more than a repetition, under vague and indefinite forms, which they thought could not be refuted, of part of the wretched stuff we saw in the lawyer's secret letter—nothing more in the world. And we have already seen how overwhelmingly they had been already refuted and exposed, and the guilt of these men in Rome exposed along with them. Of course, the vague forms are used in the expectation of concealing this, too, for they did not know how carefully behind the screens we were watching, through the chink which the lawyer's letter made for us, all this deceitful manœuvring on the part of Monsignor Guistini. Again, how could these charges be honestly brought against me by the Sacred Congregation, seeing that the Sacred Congregation itself had to decide, and most definitely declare in 1905, that I was absolutely innocent of them all? And there was not now even the pretence that there was any new evidence on the matter against me

from any quarter whatever. It was simply that the men convicted in May, 1905, were once more using in secret the same old false evidence that they were then openly convicted of using against me. The whole transaction reminds one of what we read about the Star Chamber in the days of the Plantagenet and Tudor Kings.

But in addition to all this, sworn before the Notary of the Diocese, we sent forward anew all the evidence that is already given—the repetition, therefore, not being necessary here—proving the falsehood and malice of these charges, and that it was my accusers who were proved to be guilty and convicted of these things. And as may be easily seen from the earlier chapters, from the account of the Bishop's sworn enquiry, and from the refutation of the charges contained in Father Symphorian's letter of July 23, 1904, no evidence in the world could more fully refute the allegations against me that are contained in these two charges. Like all the rest, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini withdrew them when they found how completely our evidence proved their falsehood, and would also prove up to the hilt the guilt of their accomplices at Mount Melleray, and their own connivance and guilt in the matter. For these two charges were manifestly invented to screen their interception of the evidence that proved my innocence in 1905, and the forgery of the Bishop's report in 1904.

VI

THE seventh charge was: "That when conversing with seculars I used injurious epithets to those in the community whom I supposed to be opposed to me; that I suspected them of turning the penitents from my confessional, and that I had threatened to incriminate them for it before the Lay Tribunals."

Here we have the same evidence as in the two previous charges, of the deceit and dishonesty of this one in the manner in which it was presented to me. When, where, and to whom did I use the epithets? No case of my ever having done this was ever proved, and none of these items could or would be given, though I pressed for them again and again. Is it not manifest that they would have given these necessary details, only they knew that their charges were false? And was it not a ridiculous farce to ask me to defend myself against such charges when they were not giving me one of these details which were so absolutely necessary to enable me to do so? Who could make a defence or who could possibly examine the truth of the charges without these essentials? Ordinarily speaking, it would be absolutely impossible for anyone to defend himself against such

charges formulated in this way.* Of course, that is manifestly what the thing is done for.

But, again, they reckoned without their host; for providentially in my case there was a defence that made the charge an impossibility. From the day I entered the Monastery as a novice in 1893 until 1904, I had never spoken to a secular outside, nor could I speak to any even of the community inside. During that time my life was one of perpetual silence, except as a confessor; and all these charges were made within this period. How, then, could I have used any epithets? This was proved at every one of the enquiries; and even their own Inquisitor in 1906 had to declare that it was impossible that any such charges could be brought against me, seeing that I had spoken to no one, and that my adversaries had to testify so. He made this a very special reason for not allowing myself or anyone else to give any evidence whatever in refutation of the charge, yet he now brings it against me in Rome as a thing proved by superabundant evidence. Several witnesses, including the Abbot, now proved these facts on oath; so that to save themselves and Abbot John the men in Rome had to withdraw this charge too.

The next part of this accusation is that I suspected those opposed to me of plotting to turn the penitents from my confessional. This is the same sort of accusation as the one where I was accused of being opposed to the Father, because he would not divide with me the confessions of the little girls who were preparing for first communion. If by hook or by crook they could have made it appear that I was guilty in this case, it would have screened and cloaked the guilt of their confederates at Mount Melleray in hundreds of cases; where at every one of the investigations they were convicted of doing these things. It was a case where the positive facts were proved, a hundred times over and over again, by the clearest and most convincing evidence, and where the facts had to be admitted at every investigation. Did the letters of the nuns not prove it? Did the cases of Mrs Johnson, Mrs Hall and Mrs Kelly not prove it? And did the fact that Mrs O'Neil had to die without the Sacraments not prove it? Did the case of Mrs C. of Dungarvan and her American lady friend not prove it? Did the cases where the priests were employed to warn the people, and to threaten them, and to write to them not to come to confession to me, not prove it? Did all the people sent, as we have seen, to the church to attack the penitents who came to confession to me not prove it? And this was proved to have gone on for five or six years, and there were hundreds of cases proved against

* If I proved my innocence in millions and billions of cases they could still say that I proved nothing, for that none of these were the cases to which they referred.

them, and hundreds upon hundreds of witnesses to prove it. Did the case of the children at the school and the students at the college not prove it? Does Mr B.'s letter not prove it? Does the case of the little dying girl, K. R., not prove it? Did all these cases, as seen in the earlier chapters, not prove it? Did the case of the American and Australian Bishops not prove it? For it was sworn by three witnesses, and had to be admitted, that two Bishops from Australia and one from America sent for me in order to make general confessions to me in the gentlemen's guest house. But when I went there to hear their confessions, I was turned out of it by the priest in charge; and another priest, the confessor convicted of making so many charges against me, was sent in my stead. One of the Bishops, however, discovering the deceit that was being practised on him, refused to go to this confessor and sent for the Abbot; then I had to be sent for again and heard their confessions. Did this not prove it? Did Abbot Eugene's various investigations, and the Bishop's sworn enquiry finding them guilty of doing this, not prove it? Did the Abbot's sworn evidence, testifying to every tittle of it, not prove it? And then they get rid of all this, and innumerable other proofs of their guilt, by accusing me of only "suspecting them of it." This was one of the ways by which they turned in Rome, as I have already said, every proof of my innocence and of the guilt of my accusers into new charges against me. And as long as matters remained secret, they could carry on this game *ad infinitum*.

In fact, the prevention of penitents had gone on for two or three years before I knew anything about it, and they had all been convicted of it before I had ever dreamt of what they were doing. I neither knew nor suspected who was doing it, until the Father in 1899 was convicted of having made against me in Rome the charge of preventing the faithful from freely choosing their confessors, and of causing fear to young girls, because they would not come to confession to myself; and was also convicted, as we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter of June, 1901, not only of making these charges, knowing them to be absolutely false and without foundation, but convicted also of doing the very things of which he accused me.

Of course, I had seen what was going on in the church, but I had then not even suspected that priests or religious would be guilty of getting such things done.

All the evidence above referred to as having already refuted this charge was again re-sworn before the Notary of the Diocese, and forwarded anew to the Sacred Congregation, together with the documents that proved all these facts. In addition to this, the Abbot and myself made sworn declarations that all this evidence was already

in the hands of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini at the very time these false charges were being reformulated against me.

As regards my threatening to incriminate my brethren before the Lay Tribunal, it was not at all for plotting to prevent the penitents from coming to confession to me that I did so, as this charge implies. To do that would be absurd and ridiculous because, of course, no Lay Tribunal would take cognisance of such things. But when there was no other remedy against the lies and slanders that the party at the Monastery, the priests and nuns they employed, and the women and girls frequenting the college and lodge, or flocking after the so-called doctor for cures, were originating and propagating everywhere against me, I did threaten to incriminate them for their calumnies and slanders, and to expose their agents and accomplices. And this threat, as if by magic, put a stop everywhere, for the time, to every one of their false stories and calumnies.

But as all this would not be enough to justify me as a religious in making these threats against my brethren in the community, if I could obtain protection and redress through my ecclesiastical superiors, we proved further by the sworn evidence of the Abbot and by the official reports of the Regular Inquisitor, as well as from the conduct and the boastings of the disorderly members of the community, that this protection could not be obtained, though sought for by every possible means; because the men who were at the bottom of all this at Mount Melleray had their friends and agents at the General's Office in Rome bribing and corrupting the officials there.

This was, in fact, the constant boast of the disturbers at Mount Melleray, and the meaning also of Abbot Eugene's letter of June, 1901. And that the redress could not be obtained from Rome was proved also to demonstration by Cardinal Ferrata's and Monsignor Guistini's present conduct; and so again the cause and necessity of my having to make this threat come from the corruption that was festering in the Office of the Congregation itself. Like all the rest, this charge, too, was withdrawn in order to keep all the facts against my accusers from coming to light, particularly the fact that these calumnies and slanders were encouraged from Rome, in order to give them there the appearance of having an excuse for the wrong they had done me in 1904, and were still doing me.

I must here mention that the fifth, sixth and the greater part of the seventh charge reveal a new element of deceit on the part of the Inquisition in January, 1906. I knew that these charges had been made against me in Rome. I, therefore, insisted at that Inquisition that I should have the right of disproving them by sworn evidence. The

Abbot and several other witnesses tendered evidence also completely refuting these charges, for all the monks at Mount Melleray knew that they had been falsely made against me in Rome. The Inquisitor refused to accept any of this evidence from anyone, asserting that we had no right, and no necessity, of giving such evidence, as all the reports of Abbot Eugene, of the Bishop, of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, and so much independent evidence besides, had proved me innocent of these things, and that the Sacred Congregation had declared me to be so. These were the words he used to myself when I tendered the evidence. But here now we find that he falsely reports me as proved guilty of them at this enquiry. The hidden depths of this man's dishonesty were simply unfathomable, and indeed almost inconceivable. One cannot but wonder how one small head could contain so much of it.

VII

THE reader will already have seen for himself how completely these seven charges that we have dealt with were demolished, and how the conduct of my opponents at Mount Melleray, and the guilty practices of the men in Rome and their Inquisitor, Abbot John, were exposed with regard to them.

But in forming a just estimate of the enormity of these practices it must still be remembered how my lawyer was bound on oath to secrecy; for the exposures we have seen show that, under cover of that oath of secrecy, Monsignor Guistini and his accomplices in their Star-Chamber proceedings, were still secretly using against me the false charges and false evidence contained in the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer; just as—even after we detected them in the Bishop's name in 1904 and 1905—they still secretly used the false report of his sworn enquiry for almost twelve months against me, until we dragged them into the light of day and exposed them on May 10, 1905. The exposures we have now seen of every one of the seven charges prove this. But it will appear more clearly still when we come to the refutation of the eighth and ninth charges. These two charges must, however, be reserved for a new chapter.

CHAPTER XII

I

THE eighth charge contains three parts. The first is, "that I dispensed myself from choir without sufficient reason." This is word for word the same accusation that had been previously made against me in Rome, as seen in Father Symphorian's letter of July 13, 1904. And when treating of the accusations contained therein we have already given the proofs of the groundlessness and absurdity of this charge made against me by one who for thirty years had never been known to attend choir at all. I forwarded again these overwhelming proofs, now sworn to by a dozen witnesses, and pointed out that all this evidence was laid before the Sacred Congregation in 1905; and that on this very evidence it had definitely and distinctly decided that the charge was groundless and, therefore, malicious; and that there was no pretence even that there was any further evidence against me. Like all that has gone before, this first part of the eighth charge was hurried into the wastepaper basket to conceal the double guilt of my accusers in Rome and at Mount Melleray, and of Abbot John and his Interpreter at the Inquisition in January, 1906.

II

WHAT remains of the eighth charge, and the whole of the ninth, is from beginning to end of another kind. Like the first charge about my conduct as a secular priest before I went to Mount Melleray, it was fabricated by Abbot John himself without any pretence of proof or foundation whatever. Most of it contradicted the clear proofs Abbot John had in his own hands, and the facts he saw with his own eyes. All this he had to confess himself when confronted by so many witnesses at the General Chapter in 1906, and challenged there to contradict one word of their evidence that proved it.

The second part of this eighth charge is that, "In 1904 and 1905, when I was not hearing confessions, I remained always in bed, only celebrating Mass fifteen times in a year almost." Eight witnesses including the Abbot and four priests, swore that owing to my great infirmities, they had occasion to visit my room very frequently during that time: that instead of being always in bed, I could hardly ever lie down at all owing to the troubled action and great nervous weakness of my heart, brought on by worry and trouble and by overwork;

and that this troubled state of my heart made the reclining position so very disagreeable, and even so dangerous, that I had often to remain for nights in the chair in my bedroom in the infirmary. They swore also that the Inquisitor, Abbot John, in January, 1906, who had now drawn up this charge against me, announced himself its falsehood in the Public Chapter of the whole community. From this and many of the other charges, it would seem that Abbot John—thinking the whole thing would be a sealed secret from us, as undoubtedly he did—made up his report to Rome deliberately of things so absurd and improbable that we in our ignorance would never dream of such things, or think of proving anything about them or of refuting them in any way.

The same witnesses, besides a number of others, swore that during “the almost twelve months,” referred to as “the period when I was not hearing confessions,” I had celebrated Mass at least 200 times instead of only “fifteen,” as the Inquisitor here states in the charge. These witnesses swore also that they were prepared to give this evidence on oath at the Inquisition in January, 1906, but that the Inquisitor would not permit them to refer to it or to give any evidence for me at all. The Abbot gave the extract from the official book kept by himself showing the Masses that I had said for him during that time. These witnesses swore likewise that I had often celebrated Mass at this period, when they thought it quite impossible for me to do so, owing to my infirmities, that were so manifest to all. This charge, therefore, was another unfounded fabrication of the Inquisitor himself.

How did the Inquisitor get the “fifteen” times into his head, and how did he get the twelve months? The fact was that I myself, and no one else had told him, that owing to my great infirmities during the two months ending on January 6, 1906, I had been able to celebrate Mass only fifteen times. He took a note of this in my presence; and then, by putting the figure one before the two, he was able to make it twelve months instead of two, changing the date back to June, 1905. We shall find as we proceed that this was not the only instance of the Inquisitor’s endeavouring to make me bear false testimony against myself.

III

THE third part of this charge is, “that my infirmities in 1904 and 1905 were only imaginary, and ceased immediately after I got faculties for hearing confessions again.” Abbot John at the Inquisition had forced and constrained the doctor at the Monastery to

testify that my infirmities were only imaginary, as we see in this charge and that this imagination was part of, and proved, my insanity. In the same way he represented that the two convicted fathers at the Bishop's enquiry had never accused me of violating the seal of confession; that the whole thing existed only in my diseased imagination. And again we have seen how he represented that nobody had ever interfered with the penitents in the church or elsewhere; that I had only imagined it. Then we saw very clearly in the first charge the evidence that he had invented out of my private notes about my mental deficiencies and aberrations as a secular priest in the diocese of Armagh. Here we have a regular concatenation of false evidence, insidiously scattered through the charges, and more or less concealed there, so that I could have no opportunity of directly refuting them, but all converging and combining to prove my insanity. Therefore, though they had to withdraw the false evidence seen in the lawyer's secret letter, they still hoped in this way to prove my insanity in Rome, where the judges could know nothing about me, and without my ever knowing that there was any such charge against me. For it must be remembered that when these charges were forwarded to us in December, 1907, they had expected to secure my conviction on the 14th of that month, without giving me even a moment for making my defence. Of course, we had balked them in this; but until the final trial in 1908 they had no idea of how completely we could turn all this evidence against themselves. What immediately follows, however, will show how we discovered their new plot and upset it. But nothing of all this could we ever have even suspected only for the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer.

We knew, however, that Abbot John in January, 1906, had forced and constrained the doctor to give evidence against me as he had tried to do with so many others. The doctor's mind and conscience had been greatly disturbed because of what he had so foolishly done for the Inquisitor, and in consequence he had let some of the secrets out. Knowing this, then, but still saying nothing about it to the doctor, after I had got these charges I went to him and asked him for a certificate of the infirmities I was suffering from, and of my perfect sanity of mind ever since I entered the Monastery. This was the same doctor who had testified at my simple profession that he had always looked upon me as "a living rock of common sense."

Though it must have been a rather trying ordeal for the doctor after what he had done for the Inquisitor, yet he at once gave me the following: "I hereby certify that Father Isidore has never been out of his mind, or in any way affected in his mind; and that he has never manifested any abnormal mental conditions as long as I have

known him in my capacity of medical attendant." And then he gave a second certificate as follows: "I know and hereby certify that Father Isidore's sickness, in 1904 and 1905, was not at all a merely imaginary one, but a really severe attack of neurosis, brought on by worry and overwork. The development of his sickness since then proves this."

He did not sign these documents with his name in religion, but with his secular name: so that as the two names were quite different, if the documents fell into the Inquisitor's hands he would not know who it was that signed them, particularly as there were other doctors coming to the Monastery. Though still saying nothing about it, I at once saw what this meant, and probably the doctor saw that I knew it, for I insisted that he should affix his religious name also. He, at any rate, sometime after this, sent for me when he got an opportunity; for those opposed to me had him now shut up and under constant watch and guard to let no one see him, under the pretence that his mind was disturbed.* When he sent for me on this occasion, he said that he was ashamed of himself, and that I would be astonished at what he had to tell me; but that he had long since done all he could to make amends for it. He then detailed the treacherous and deceptive steps by which the Inquisitor, Abbot John, had led him on from one to another, until he had forced and constrained him to sign the certificate of my insanity and that my infirmities were only imaginary and a symptom and proof of my abnormal mental condition.

The doctor next told me that he had written to the Inquisitor in France retracting all he had sworn for him about my being insane; and that in reply he had got a short note back from the Inquisitor, contained in a letter to one of my opponents, saying that he—the Inquisitor—was deeply pained and grieved to know that the doctor was now retracting what he had sworn about Father Isidore being insane. The doctor then gave me the following retraction which he had prepared, and which I forwarded to my lawyer in Rome, as I did all the evidence bearing on the case. Here it is:

"MOUNT MELLERAY ABBEY.

"December 31, 1907.

"I had heard from some members of our community and otherwise that certain extravagances had been committed by Father Isidore in the secular church and in the Monastery, of such a nature as would indicate insanity. I erred in giving too ready credence

* The moment they knew at Mount Melleray that the trial was ended in Rome he was one of the sanest men in the Monastery; his mental conditions were normal.

to these reports. What I testified to the Reverend Father Visitor in January, 1906, about Father Isidore's mental condition was in the main testified because I believed these statements. I now believe that these statements about Father Isidore were exaggerations; and I, therefore, hereby retract all the evidence I gave at the Apostolic Visitation in January, 1906, regarding Father Isidore's mental conditions or his insanity.

“(Signed) FR. —.”

Though on reading this retraction by the doctor, I saw that, with the other documents I had from him, it quite sufficiently destroyed any evidence the writer had given against me; yet before I left him I expressed my opinion that his retraction was rather meagre and guarded, and that it fell far short of exposing what the Inquisitor had so iniquitously done according to the doctor's own statements. But, of course, I could not force him to give fuller details, nor did I attempt to do so, particularly as I could not reveal what was in the secret letter from the Abbot's lawyer. I received, however, the same evening the following notes from the doctor:

“With regard to what you mentioned to-day, I may say that I made a much ampler and more detailed retraction in my note to the Visitor, and expressed it in stronger terms than in the one I gave you this morning. In my letter to you I did not wish to violate the “Prohibitions” given at the Inquisition, lest it might come into Abbot John's hands, and in his wrath he might come down on myself; for from the note he sent me on the subject, he seemed to feel the retraction painfully and bitterly.

“FR. —.”

Now, not only had the Inquisitor forced the doctor to give this evidence, but by the “Prohibitions,” which we have seen when treating of the Inquisition in January, 1905, he made it impossible for the doctor, as he thought, to expose what the Inquisitor had done, or retract the false evidence he had himself secretly given; except, indeed, to the officials of the Sacred Congregation, where Abbot John knew that the exposure and retraction would be of no use to me. So that the doctor's evidence was still being used in Rome against me, and his retraction made through the Inquisitor in August, 1906, like all the other evidence in my favour, was being intercepted. This is quite plain, among other things, from the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer in March, 1907, where he speaks of the superabundant proofs of my insanity; for that secret letter was

written seven months after the doctor had retracted his evidence. Then, again, my own lawyer was bound on oath to let me know nothing except what Monsignor Guistini permitted him to write. But my lawyer never wrote me a word about this charge of insanity or this evidence being used against me in Rome. And I should never have known a word about it only for the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer; so that we see how they were still using it to prove me insane without giving me any opportunity of refuting it.

But, now, whom think you did the Inquisitor in January, 1906, endeavour to obtain as a witness to corroborate this evidence of my insanity? Why, my own self, and in this way. After he had secretly forced the doctor to give this false testimony against me, he came and asked me, quite as a matter of course, to make a written statement for him to the effect that the doctor was a fair-minded man, whose word could be thoroughly relied on by the Sacred Congregation in Rome! He said this would help him very much and serve us all, and myself especially. And when I refused to do as he desired he accused me of casting a very serious reflection on the doctor's character, saying he would take note of my conduct in this matter. Could anyone imagine a meaner or more treacherous scheme than this whole transaction reveals? And this was the man who posed at Mount Melleray as the representative of the Pope.

Now we see, however, that the one witness, and the only one they had or could have to prove "that my infirmities were only imaginary," had fully retracted his false evidence on the point more than sixteen months before these charges were forwarded to me; yet here the false evidence is used against me still, and the retraction is withheld.

And then we see that the fact of "my infirmities being imaginary" was only an incident of my being insane: so that after having withdrawn the evidence that so overwhelmingly disproved that charge of insanity, as contained in the lawyer's secret letter to the Abbot, in this treacherous way of calling it now an "imaginary infirmity," when writing to me they were still keeping up the retracted evidence that the Inquisitor had so perfidiously manufactured to prove me insane. The hunt, however, was now ended, for they were caught in their own trap. The doctor's exposure and retraction could not be gainsaid; and as we had it in our own hands they could not well escape from it.

But we did not stop with this mere retraction, for we had seen how the evidence of the Bishop and of Abbot Eugene had been intercepted in Rome because it proved my innocence, and how they dare not now give any evidence in my favour, because they were

under the jurisdiction of the Officials of the Roman Congregations. There was no reason, therefore, why the same might not be done in the doctor's case, for he, too, was under that jurisdiction. We, therefore, resolved to prove the case against them with independent evidence from the outside. Here, then, was the next document we sent them:

“ 20 SOUTH MALL,

“ CORK.

“ May 14 1907.

“ The Reverend Father Isidore came under my care first in September, 1904. He was then suffering from stomach troubles and affection of the heart of nervous origin. I saw Father Isidore again in July, 1906. He was then suffering from neuritis of the right muscular spiral nerve. He was so bad and in such pain that I put him into St Joseph's Home, a private hospital attached to the Mercy Hospital, under the Sisters of Mercy.

“ I look upon his illness, the neuritis of his heart and the affection of the nerves, as simple manifestations of a lowered state of health, the result of worry and overwork.

“ The wasting of his muscles, the loss of power in the right arm, and the tremour point to gross nerve lesion. The condition of his heart is so palpable that to consider his illness as ‘imaginary’ is to my mind imagination of a very delusive type.

“ Father Isidore's mental conditions were at all times absolutely and perfectly normal.

“ (Signed) P. T. SULLIVAN, M.D.,

“ Senior Physician, Cork South Infirmary; Examiner Royal University, etc.”

This again proved, on the very highest and best testimony, that my infirmities were not “merely imaginary” but very real and manifest, during “the twelve months almost” from July 2, 1904, to the end of June, 1905. We have it proved likewise that they did not cease after that date, but were greatly intensified; and that to suppose them imaginary was indeed imagination of a very delusive type; and, moreover, that my mind was always perfectly sound and my mental conditions, to use the doctor's own term and that of the lawyer's secret letter, “perfectly normal.”

Then we proved the same things by the testimony of almost innumerable witnesses who were seeing me every week or every day, and many of them almost every hour. These witnesses were not only the Abbot and priests and other members of the community but

magistrates, doctors, lawyers, men in high government positions, business men, and others of every class and rank in the outside world. Were they all deceived and was there nobody to be believed but these convicted officials in Rome and their imaginary evidence?

But the Inquisitor gives his own positive proof to show that my infirmities were certainly only imaginary. He says that it is proved by the fact that they ceased immediately after I again got faculties to hear confessions. But the doctors show that it was after this that my infirmities grew worse and worse, and everyone of the witnesses testified the same, while Abbot John declared so himself in January, 1906, as all my witnesses testified. So that we now see that this whole charge from beginning to end is the pure invention of the Inquisitor himself. Yet it would have appeared to be almost gospel truth in Rome if we had not detected it. Of course, all this, too, was instantly withdrawn in Rome and nothing more heard of it, because even there Abbot John's conduct in the doctor's case could not bear the light of day.

IV

WE now come to the ninth and last charge, namely, that I failed in obedience by not attending the closing session of the Visitation held by Abbot John and his Secretary in January, 1906. Here there is a complete suppression of the existing scene at the conclusion of the Inquisition when the Secretary so falsely and so unblushingly declared that I was found guilty of the most horrible crime possible. There is not a word of allusion to it, though this was the circumstance that made it absolutely imperative on me to absent myself. Nor is there any reference to the extraordinary letter the Inquisitor sent back to the Monastery; because these things would have fully exposed the unscrupulous conduct both of the Inquisitor and of his Secretary.

Notwithstanding these suppressions, however, this charge now gave us the opportunity of proving, by the testimony of many witnesses, all that was done by them at that shocking Inquisition of January, 1906.

Therefore, by the evidence of ten members of the community including the Abbot himself and seven priests, we proved all that I have stated regarding it, showing that their Inquisition was not by any means an enquiry to discover the truth of things, but a manifest attempt throughout to stifle justice and truth, and to force the members of the community as exemplified in the doctor's and many other cases, to give whatever evidence, true or false, they thought would screen the great wrongs done me by the General's

Office, the General Chapter and the Officials of the Sacred Congregation. It is not necessary to repeat these things here, as they have already been so ample and so recently detailed.

These witnesses testified also—giving in proof thereof the facts and details as seen in the narrative—that the Inquisitor and his Secretary had done all that lay in their power to destroy the peace and charity of the community, and to enkindle and inflame ill-feeling and bad passions among its members; then seeking to attribute all this to me. And in conclusion they all swore that by what they said and did, with regard to the false charges of violating the seal of confession as already detailed, Abbot John and his Secretary left no course open to me but as a public protest to refuse absolutely and indignantly to attend the final session of the Visitation, unless they made full retraction and full reparation for the wrong they had done me as a priest and confessor; and that they would have been shocked and scandalized if I had attended under the circumstances, seeing, as was manifest to all, that the Secretary had deliberately made the statement about me that they all knew to be so false, and knew that the Inquisitor would not permit it to be retracted. Several of them at the same time testified that no decent language could adequately express the shameless deceit and falsehood practised by both of them throughout, but especially towards the end of the enquiry. They likewise testified to the manifest malice and untruthfulness of the letter that Abbot John sent back to the Monastery to be publicly read against me in the presence of the whole community.

V

THIS trial, therefore, laid bare to the very foundations, and proved to the last item, all the deceitful and unscrupulous things we have seen done at Mount Melleray and in Rome under the garb and cloak of religion. But, as it was their only means of escape now, they consigned charges and evidence and all else to the wastepaper basket, just as Abbot Eugene describes it for us in his letter of June, 1901. And then throwing off all shame and reserve, they pretended to convict me for their own crimes, as otherwise they could find nothing against me. How they did this we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

I

It was now clearly proved, after having been proved and admitted a hundred times before, that there was nothing in the world against me; that all these charges that had been so recklessly and so viciously made for years were utterly unfounded; that the evidence with which they had sought to sustain them was one mass of untruths, and that it was my adversaries at Mount Melleray and their accomplices and agents in Rome who were the guilty parties throughout. Yet a few days after the trial had concluded I got an order from Rome through the Abbot-General declaring that I must leave Mount Melleray in Ireland and be imprisoned in New Melleray in the State of Iowa in America; and that this was to be done without a moment's delay. Accompanying this order there came another document to the same effect, signed, like the previous false one of June 25, 1904, by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. This latter document purported, as in 1904, to be a decision of the Sacred Congregation, and it had the "Et amplius" attached; so that I was never to the Day of Judgment to be allowed even to re-open the case.

But, through my lawyer, I also got from Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini themselves, the following declaration: "The Sacred Congregation has not intended to punish you or declare you in any way culpable; the decision has been given for the sake of peace. It is necessary to obey, and there is no remedy." As we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter of June, 1901, this was exactly what my accuser at Mount Melleray, who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations so well, always boasted that he could get done at the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, and what my other adversaries also said that their friend and agent in Rome would get done with money and influence. But it is now far worse than anyone could have ever suspected, coming as it does after all we have seen.

II

IN the first place, they declare that the Sacred Congregation—meaning, of course, this sentence, does not intend to punish me or declare me culpable. They thought, of course, to make it appear that, as there was no punishment intended or guilt implied in the sentence, they could pass it no matter how innocent I might be. Now, was it

true that the sentence was no punishment, or that it did not imply any guilt? Both were false not only in the sentence itself but doubly so, as we shall see, in the manner in which they sought to carry it out. The sentence was not only a punishment, but, as a matter of fact, the most extreme and severe punishment that could be inflicted under the Laws and Constitutions of the Cistercian Order to which I belonged; and the sentence necessarily branded me as convicted of the most heinous crimes.

The sentence was that I should be exiled for life to one of the most remote Monasteries of the Order, and imprisoned there without the hope of appeal, for this was the meaning of the "Et amplius." Now, according to the "Ancient Definitions" of the Cistercian Order, from which its present Constitution and its present Laws on the subject are taken, this is the most severe punishment that can be inflicted on any member of the Order. It is, moreover, a punishment that can be inflicted only for the three most heinous crimes known in the Order, namely, wilful murder, open and flagitious crimes against Holy Purity, and grave conspiracy against the life and authority of the Abbot of the Monastery; and the mere infliction of this punishment renders the person against whom it has been pronounced canonically "infamous" for life, and his name and character "infamous" after death. Was it not, then, absurdly false and ridiculous for Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to assert that they did not intend to declare me guilty or to punish me?

If it was a human act at all, was the deliberate intention of punishing me not necessarily contained in the act itself, quite as fully and manifestly as if the murderer had acknowledged that he had deliberately lifted a loaded gun and fired it at his victim? And did the sentence of itself not necessarily imply to the world that I was found guilty of the most heinous crimes, seeing that it was only for these that such a sentence could be inflicted? What could be plainer? It all comes to this, that these men care not what they do or say, so long as they think they can do it in secret against those who cannot expose them.

Again, at my profession I bound myself under a bilateral contract, sealed with a solemn vow and with the sanction and authority of the Church, to give all my time, my labour and my services during life to the Community and Abbot of Mount Melleray, binding myself also never to leave the Monastery even for one moment without the special permission of the Abbot. On the other hand, by an equally solemn and binding contract, the Community of Mount Melleray as a corporate body bound itself through the Abbot to keep, support and maintain me in the Monastery to the moment of my death. This,

as a solemn bilateral contract, was as binding in justice on both sides in the Roman Catholic Church as the contract of marriage in the sacrament of matrimony. To the letter and in the spirit of the law, I kept all my vows and obligations, which were the terms of the contract on my side. But this sentence, with one stroke of the pen, destroyed every one of my rights under that contract; and it did this in the same breath in which it declared me innocent. This was a thing neither the Sacred Congregation nor anyone else had any power or authority to do. Moreover, the sentence imposed on me a new obligation, that is, the obligation of making a new vow if I were to remain a member of the Cistercian Order, just as if the wife were not only bound to leave the home of her husband, but compelled to enter into a new matrimonial contract. This last was not only sacrilege, it was blasphemy on the part of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, claiming to have from Heaven a power over my will, the power of compelling me to make a new vow, which God Himself in Heaven never claims. But, indeed, all through this case, these men have written and acted as if, because they were in Rome, they were not only Popes themselves but Super-Popes; in fact, little divinities quite independent of the Supreme Being and His Laws.

But was all this no punishment at all? Did all this not imply in the eyes of the world culpability and crime on my part? Otherwise, why was I deprived in this cruel manner of my just and legal rights? Who cares a straw in such a case about the hidden intentions of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini? We know quite well from their acts what they were. It is their acts and not their intentions that we have to deal with, and their acts in the case are the acts of unscrupulous vendettists, unlawfully seeking and taking revenge for their exposure in May, 1905. The very fact that they have now to declare me innocent proves this.

Then, the moment I left Mount Melleray under this sentence and entered any other monastery of the Order, I had no more rights and no more claims in that new monastery than in the King's palace, and against the King himself. The new monastery could turn me out at any moment in my old age, absolutely penniless, to starve or die on the wayside. Was this no punishment? Did this not violate the last vestiges of the terms of the bilateral contract made with the Abbot of Mount Melleray on the occasion of my profession? Did this not, in the eyes of the world, imply guilt on my part? Otherwise why should I be so punished?

But they did not stop here; they commanded that I should be confined in this remote monastery, not at all as a member of the Order, but as a condemned prisoner, with the mark and stamp of infamy

thereby attached to my character and reputation for life and even in the grave after death.

That I was to be confined in this remote monastery as a convicted prisoner is plain; for under the terms of my vows made in Mount Melleray, and under the bilateral contract contained therein, as already stated, and as all the Canonists are agreed, they could not otherwise send me and keep me there against my will, and in violation of the terms of the contract and the conditions of my solemn vows. They could only do so on the supposition that I was a condemned and convicted prisoner, and consequently the sentence necessarily branded me as such before the eyes of the world and in the monastery I went to.

Besides all this the Laws and Constitutions of the Order, and the Holy Rule of St Benedict on which they are founded, distinctly declare that no member of the Order can be compelled to leave the monastery of his profession, and confined against his will in a remote monastery, as I was now to be confined, except as a prisoner and criminal found guilty of the grievous crimes mentioned above. And not only the Laws and the Constitutions and the Vows, but the everyday practice of the Order make this quite clear. For in the Cistercian Order no one is ever forced to leave the monastery of his profession, and go into exile in a remote country, in such a way as I am here compelled to do, unless he is convicted of some of the crimes mentioned; or that, for some reason or other, the member himself voluntarily consents to do so, which I did not, and could not conscientiously do in the circumstances. The sentence then, under every aspect, is a punishment, and deliberately intended as a punishment, and the severest punishment that could be inflicted on any member of the Cistercian Order; it is a sentence that could neither legally nor justly be passed on anyone except after they had been found guilty of the most odious crimes. And I am not found guilty of anything in the world, but proved and declared over and over again to be innocent; and even declared to be so in the very breath in which the sentence was inflicted. The sentence then had no more legality, validity or justice of any kind in it, than if I sentenced any man in the street to death and proceeded forthwith to execute my sentence.

III

Now, the question arises, was this sentence another deliberate concoction on the part of Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and the men in the General's Office, like the one we have seen before in 1904? It most certainly was, and could be nothing else for several reasons.

There may, of course, have been others involved in it, but it never could have been a veritable sentence of the Tribunal of the Congregation. In the first place it was a sentence, as we have seen, that the Tribunal, seeing that I was proved and declared to be innocent, could no more pass on me than they could pass it on the Pope himself. Again, this sentence would not only impose on me the obligation of violating one of my vows, that is, my vow of remaining through life in the monastery of my profession, which is one of the essential vows of the Cistercian Order, but it would also oblige me to make a new vow in the monastery to which I was sent, if I were to remain there at all as a member of the Order and not as a convicted criminal, which they declare I am not. Now, neither the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation nor the Pope, nor even Almighty God, seeing that He has given me free will, can ever impose upon me the obligation of making a new vow of this kind or of any kind. It is only my own free will that can do it. Is it not, then, absurd and ridiculous to suppose that all the cardinals, constituting the Tribunal of this Sacred Congregation, would be so grossly ignorant as to pass such a monstrous sentence against an innocent man, or, to use their own term, a man found not culpable, as we see I am found and declared by them to be? And if they did pass the sentence it would have no validity in the world; because they would be usurping a power that they never had, and that nobody could give them. These reasons make it *de jure* utterly impossible that the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation could ever have passed such a sentence against me.

But there are other reasons, founded on facts, as well as on law, that clinch the matter. In 1910 I visited in Rome the cardinals constituting this Tribunal, and they denied that they ever knew anything about the case, and the name of no cardinal who knew anything about it could ever be given, except that of Cardinal Ferrata himself. There can be no possibility of doubt, then, but that it was the same men who forged the Bishop's report, and concocted the sentence against me on the strength of it in 1904, who again, under cover of the oaths of secrecy and the "Prohibitions" at Mount Melleray, concocted this sentence also.

I now give what Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and the Abbot-General, all of whom were involved and convicted in the decision of May 10, 1905, pretend to be the sentence against me for, fortunately, I have secured the original copy of it, as it came to Mount Melleray. It, too, shows clearly that this sentence like the false one in June, 1904, proves itself to be a manifest fraud and a very clumsy concoction or forgery. It is as follows:

"There being proposed at a general meeting on March 14, 1908,

the following dubium or question: 'If, and how, Father Isidore ought to be transferred to another Monastery? The Cardinals answered affirmative et amplius.'

Now, according to the powers and procedure of the Congregation and the Laws and Constitution of the Cistercian Order the thing could not be done and, therefore, as we see, there is no answer whatever to the question, how it should be done. The reason of this is because it could not possibly be done by them. But if it could not possibly be done the affirmative answer to the "If" is also an impossibility because the Congregation would be doing a thing that it had no power to do. This makes the whole decision an utter impossibility.

Besides what we have seen there are many other manifest reasons that make this pretended decision not only impossible but ridiculous.

As any one can see, for example, in Stremler on the *Procedure of the Roman Congregations*, pages 595 to 597 of the Paris Edition, 1860 in a contentious case like the present, no question was ever permitted before this Congregation save those that could be answered by a direct affirmation or negation; i.e., either by the words "affirmative" or "negative," just as a jury answers "guilty" or "not guilty" to the various counts of an indictment. But in the above dubium or query the question how this thing is to be done could be answered neither by an affirmation nor a negation. Therefore, the question could not even be put before the Tribunal of the Congregation in the form in which they allege it was put.

Again, according to its procedure the Tribunal of the Congregation must inform the accused who his prosecutor or opponent is. But I was never informed at this trial that there was any prosecutor or opponent; I was simply left to contend with shadows. So that not only the sentence but the whole procedure was a ridiculous farce; it ended however for me in a tragedy.

IV

BUT they allege that I am bound to accept and obey whatever they command, no matter how unjust, illegal or invalid their commands may be. That this was the false principle on which they were acting was clearly seen in the Procurator's letter of November 24, 1904, and in every one of the letters of Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General, that preceded the rescindment of the sentence against me on May 10, 1905. But that rescindment showed that the principle was an utterly false and deceptive one, invented to screen their own

acts. And the principle that was so false then could not be an honest and true one now.

But even if I were powerless to resist their injustice and their tyranny, no matter how glaring and manifest it might be, does that justify them in condemning me and punishing me, even when they declared me innocent? If that be so, the judge would be justified in sentencing to death the man found and declared "not guilty" provided only that the innocent man could not call the unjust judge to account for it. In fact, the principles these men preached, and practised in the case, are worthy of a Robespierre. Their doctrine would admit no moral or divine law that would restrain them; it would justify every one of the barbarous acts of the reign of terror and every blood-thirsty tyrant from Nero to the present. This, according to their own repeated statements, is the sort of perverted law and justice they practise in their Star-Chamber conclaves. And then Cardinal Ferrata adds the "*Et amplius*" to the sentence; which means that there is to be no appeal whatever against all this. Surely this is tyranny and injustice with a vengeance.

But now supposing that by using false documents and false evidence, by withholding the truth, and by binding my lawyer on oath to secrecy about it all, the men in Rome had induced the Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation to pass the illegal and unjust and absurd sentence against me, that they pretended it did—which we have clearly seen that they did not succeed in doing—even then am I obliged to obey it? Certainly not. Neither by virtue of obedience nor by my vows am I obliged to obey anything in the case, except what was contained either explicitly or implicitly in my vows. And this sentence is in no way contained therein, but is directly opposed to them, seeing that it would oblige me to violate my vow of remaining in the Monastery of Mount Melleray and nowhere else during my life.

That I am not obliged to obey anything in the case, save what is explicitly or implicitly contained in my vows, has been decided over and over again by the Holy See and the Tribunals of the Sacred Congregations, and was again most distinctly decided against Cardinal Ferrata, Monsignor Guistini and the men in the General's Office in the rescindment on May 10, 1905, thus condemning them for daring to assert the contrary against me. This is also proved by many reasons. There is one argument, however, bearing specifically and directly on the case which contains them all, and is, therefore, all-sufficient. It is the more so as it is the reason given by St Bernard, the head of the Cistercian Order, the very highest authority on the subject, and who has been followed by every subsequent Canonist

and writer. In the seventh chapter, "On Precept and Dispensation," St Bernard says: "He who makes profession, promises obedience; but not absolute and unlimited obedience but a precisely limited and strictly defined obedience according to the Rule of his Order. Hence, if my Abbot or other superior happen to try to impose some obligation that is not contained in, or is not in accordance with the Rule, what obligation of obedience can there possibly be on me in that case; seeing that nothing can be required from me but what I have promised in my vows." Nothing could be plainer than this.

But now, as can be seen by anyone, in the formula of my profession and of the profession of every member of the Cistercian Order as given in the fourth chapter of the "Constitutions, Laws and Customs of the Order," published in 1904, the year immediately preceding my profession, and published by the General Chapter of the Order, with the full sanction and approval of the Pope, the terms of my vows were to remain in Mount Melleray to death.* This and no more was my binding vow to God, and, while I am convicted of nothing, no power on earth or even in Heaven can increase or change it against my will. And in the second place, my vows, as seen in that formula, was "obedience according to the rule of St Benedict," which rule, again, forbids me to go to any other monastery, and forbids and prohibits—while I am innocent and not a convicted criminal—all and every one of my superiors to send me against my will to any other monastery, much more, in my old age, into perpetual exile in a remote one like New Melleray in distant Iowa. For, as St Bernard says, they can require nothing of me but what I have vowed and promised in my profession. How, then, could I be bound in conscience

* Here is the form of profession in which the vows are made:

"Ego, frater N. (name in religion and family name) Sacerdos promitto stabilitatem meam, conversionem morum meorum et obedientiam secundum Regulam Sancti Benedicti, Abbatis, coram Deo, et omnibus sanctis ejus quorum Reliquiae hic habentur, in hoc loco qui vocatur Mons Mellearius Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorem B.M.V. de Trappa constructo in honorem ejusdem Beatissimae Dei Genetricis somperque Virginis Mariae, in praesentia Domini N. (name of Superior) hujusce monasterii Abbatis."

"Stabilitatem" signifies that the person vowing is to remain in the Monastery for life. "Obedientiam secundum Regulam Sancti Benedicti" (obedience according to the rule of St Benedict) limits the obligation of the vow, as St Bernard says, to what is laid down in the rule of St Benedict. "In loco qui vocatur Mons Mellearius" fixes the place of my domicile for life at Mount Melleray, the Monastery of my vows.

Beyond everything "In loco qui vocatur Mons Mellearius" is accentuated because in the presence of all the community the person making profession again publicly vows to the Abbot as follows: "I promise to you, Reverend Father, and to your successors obedience until death according to the Rule of St Benedict." It is thus clearly seen that it is to the Abbot of his profession and his successors only that the novice is bound. But if a novice makes his vow in one monastery with the intention of fulfilling his obligation in another, he must definitely declare his intention, even in the words of his vow, otherwise the obligation to remain in the monastery of his declaration will be binding. See *Book of Constitution and Usages*, pp. 45-46.

to do the very thing that I and every one of my superiors are forbidden to do, and that I am specially bound under a solemn vow not to do? No, by my vow, I was no more bound to obey this sentence than if they had commanded me to rob or steal or plunder. No power on earth or even in Heaven can in opposition to my will extend the obligation of my vows; and to assert otherwise, as they do here, is rank tyranny, claiming a power over my will that not even God in Heaven asks of me, seeing that beyond what I voluntarily vowed He has left my will free.

Of course, it would have been quite different if I had been found guilty of any of the things for which, according to the laws of the Order, I could be removed from the Monastery. They could then do it as a punishment.

It would be quite different also with the members of some of the other Orders of the Church, the Jesuits and Dominicans, for example. They can be, and are, changed from house to house, at the will of their superiors because their vows and rules enjoin this, and the members of each order in the Roman Catholic Church are bound only by their own particular vows and rules. But they had just as much right to try me under martial law, or under the laws and rules of the Freemasons, as under those of any other Order of the Church except those of the one to which I belonged and to which I had vowed fidelity.

This false cry of obedience, so often used before by Father Symphorian and his convicted accomplices in 1904 and 1905, is nothing, then, but another piece of chicanery, invented to frighten me and to deceive the public, who know nothing about the different laws and rules of the various Orders in the Roman Catholic Church; for even highly educated Roman Catholics themselves are quite ignorant of them.

V

BUT they assert that it is "for the sake of peace" that they are condemning and sentencing me, and that, therefore, I am bound to submit at once to all this terrible wrong and injustice, no matter how unjust or how unlawful my condemnation may be. But no one has ever been able to show that I, by any act or mine, disturbed the peace of the Monastery, nor indeed has anyone ever accused me of it. And since they are condemning me "for the sake of peace" as if I had disturbed it, why did they not charge me with causing the disturbance of the peace and try me on that charge, instead of so often making such and so many charges that are now proved and

admitted to be so false on their part? But why not at once shoot or hang me "for the sake of peace"? That would be a quicker way; and they had just as much right to do the one thing as the other, for they had no right in the world to do either.

Great tyrants, no doubt, have sometimes by their butcheries even created a wilderness and called it peace. In the light of history, however, that plausible phrase has not justified their inhumanity; so that the phrase itself has become more than ambiguous, it is even suspicious. Let us, then, in the light of our experience and of what we have seen, examine what it is that these men mean by it here.

As we have seen in Abbot Eugene's letter of June 12, 1901, when the man who knew Rome and the Roman Congregations well was condemned of being a false accuser and calumniator, and of being guilty of the things with which he accused me, he boasted that he could get me convicted in Rome, no matter how innocent I might be, under the pretence that the thing was done "for the sake of peace." And we have seen that he was right; for this was the meaning of my conviction in 1904, and of all the things we have seen in connexion with it. That lets us see a little of what it means.

When Father Symphorian was detected and proved to have forged the sentences of the two Congregations against me, as well as the order of the late Abbot-General, he tells us in his letter of July 13, 1904, to the Abbot of Mount Melleray, that to screen all this, and to screen also the crimes and guilt of my accusers, I ought and must "for the sake of peace" submit to his infamous sentence.

In May, 1905, we also convicted Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini with the men in the General's Office in Rome of forging the report in the Bishop's name and of intercepting the true one, and then of sending their Apostolic Inquisitor to Mount Melleray in January, 1906, to suborn and intimidate men to make the false charge we have seen; to destroy the peace and charity of the Monastery by enkindling and inflaming ill-feeling and bad passions among the members, and then attributing it to me; and finally to ruin and destroy my character in the community. Again, at this new trial we have convicted them of intercepting all the true evidence, and of attempting to use a whole mass of false evidence and documents in their unscrupulous endeavours to convict me and to screen their own infamy and that of their accomplices. And now, when detected, withdrawing the evidence that proves all this, and turning against me their own wrong-doings and those of their accomplices, they tell me that though proved innocent I must "for the sake of peace" allow myself to be unlawfully imprisoned for life, and publicly branded for ever as a convicted and infamous criminal. Surely in

these circumstances, and after all we have seen, they could not expect that the absurd pretence that they are doing all this "for the sake of peace" could deceive anyone. Does every one not see that it is revenge and not peace they are in pursuit of, especially since their own exposure and conviction in May, 1905? Why otherwise all the infamous things we have witnessed since then, and did their conviction in May, 1905, not prove them capable of anything?

The thing itself is thus manifest to the world. But now comes the explanation of it all. They tell me "there is no remedy" for me against all this cruel wrong and injustice. And they seek to make good this tyrannical threat; for by the "Prohibitions" of the Inquisitor at Mount Melleray, by the oaths of secrecy under which they have bound the lawyers and all concerned, by their treacherous "withdrawals" of the evidence proving their own guilt and my innocence, by their threats and intimidation of every one in Rome and elsewhere connected with the case, and above all by shutting me up as a convicted prisoner in remote Iowa, where I can communicate with nobody except through themselves or their agents, they feel quite sure that they have made it impossible for me to obtain any remedy whatever. This indeed is the true meaning and explanation of the whole of their conduct, so that "for the sake of peace" is only the worst form of tyranny wearing the garb of religious hypocrisy.

CHAPTER XIV

I

THIS extraordinary sentence was given against me on March 14, and, as in June, 1904, it also was to be executed instantly without allowing me a moment's respite, or any appeal whatever. But though I refused to recognize it as having any force or validity, seeing that—not to speak of the many other gross wrongs and manifest irregularities and illegalities of the proceedings, that rendered the sentence null and void—they had to declare me innocent, thereby admitting themselves that they had no power to pass it, and though I notified them of this, and did not leave Mount Melleray until the end of May, yet they did not dare to inflict any punishment, or disabilities, nor did they dare to deprive me of any of my faculties as a confessor. This last particularly they would undoubtedly have been bound to do at once, if the sentence against me had not been a repetition of the lawless sentence of 1904.

But now, at the end of May, they hit upon a new plan that changed matters altogether. They had caused the Abbot to resign; and they now notified him that he would be enclosed in one of the French Monasteries, practically as a prisoner, unless I went to New Melleray in America. However unjust and however cruel and inhuman this might be, they had the legal power of doing it in the case of an Abbot who has had to resign, for that is one of the conditions under which he is appointed Abbot. This was a merciless blow, for the Abbot was in a weak and dying state; and there was no concealing the fact that the dread and horror of it was fast breaking his heart. Every one knew it, and, with big tears in his eyes, he told me so himself. In fact, he died a few months after of a broken heart, from all he had suffered.

II

To save him, then, I left Mount Melleray in Ireland and went to New Melleray in America, though in no wise bound to do so. Of course, I did it under protest that it was against my will, and consequently contrary to the Laws and Constitutions of the Order, and an illegal and a gross and glaring violation of my rights, which I in no way relinquished by going in such circumstances.

I arrived at the Monastery of New Melleray in the month of June, 1908, and though, according to the orders and commands already received there from the Abbot-General, they could only receive me as a condemned and convicted criminal, yet the Abbot and all the monks were inclined to treat me in the most kindly manner. Most of them, if not all, knew a great deal about the gross wrong and injustice done me, as well as all about the intrigues and plots at Mount Melleray, and about the money and influence in Rome that were at the bottom of it. Besides they knew that, as far as the French Abbots in particular were concerned, the attack on me was only a part of their long-planned and unscrupulous campaign against themselves in order to obtain possession of their Monastery.

But shortly after I went to New Melleray, the Abbot there started from it for the General Chapter of the Order, which was to be held at Citeaux in France in the beginning of September. Before leaving, however, he told his friends that he had long since been notified that, like Abbot Carthage of Mount Melleray, he, too, at that General Chapter, was to be deposed from the Abbacy of the Monastery, as the Abbot-General and the French Abbots were now going to seize New Melleray for themselves, and for the monks of their own nationality.

In fact, in 1906, when the French Abbots were deposing the Abbot

of Mount Melleray, it was also arranged as a part of the same campaign that the Abbot-General should go to America in the spring of 1907, to make preparations for taking over for themselves the Irish Monastery of New Melleray. And in 1907 the Abbot-General had already started from Rome, and had proceeded as far as France on his way to America to make arrangements for doing this. But he had to turn back in order to defend himself in Rome, when he found that Abbot Carthage of Mount Melleray had lodged the appeal to the Holy See against the decision of the French Abbots, and that he was resolved to prosecute it to the end. Then in the course of the trial of his appeal, the Abbot of Mount Melleray had exposed and proved so much illegality and corruption on the part of the General's Office; and their accomplices in Rome, that they had to give up for the time being at least the project of grabbing New Melleray. In fact, to prevent the French Abbots from annexing it, was one of the principal objects that Abbot Carthage aimed at in bringing his appeal; and in that he succeeded, so that they dare not now put a finger on it.

But the Abbot of New Melleray, an octogenarian, living in the most extreme seclusion in distant Iowa, and only attending the General Chapter in France every fifth year instead of every year, knew nothing about all this; nor, indeed, could he understand anything about it, save the one solitary fact that the French Abbots, headed by the Abbot-General, had resolved and threatened to depose himself. He thought, therefore, that he was still absolutely at their mercy, especially after the way in which they had treated Abbot Carthage in Ireland. The dread of his own deposition was, therefore, his only trouble and anxiety.

III

BUT when he went to the General Chapter, the French Abbots and the General and his staff of officials, as they could not longer depose him, and wanted to use him against me, had now nothing but French smiles and compliments for him, with expressions of the greatest possible praise and admiration for his labours and his faithful administration of the Monastery of New Melleray; declaring that they would never think of taking that Monastery from the Irish, or of making any changes there during his life. Under another form this was a repetition of the secret letter of the Roman-lawyer to the Abbot of Mount Melleray before the trial in 1907, in order to get him to assist them in the attack on me. Having thus won over to **their** side the Abbot of New Melleray, who had none of the grit of

the Abbot of Mount Melleray, the next thing was to give him instructions and orders that he must now treat me as a convicted criminal and prisoner, and with the full rigour of the law, on account of the troubles into which I had brought the General Chapter, the General's Office and the General himself, as well as even the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; for this Congregation was now actually suppressed by the Pope on account of some of the things that had come to light. They said that if an example were not made of me, this sort of thing would spread, and that there would be no peace at all as long as I was allowed to go on. This was the Abbot of New Melleray's own account of the matter when he returned to the Monastery. In addition to this, every one of the false stories against me, and every one of the slanders was poured into his ears, both by the Abbot-General's staff at the General Chapter, and by the party at Mount Melleray where he had stopped for a fortnight.

The Abbot of New Melleray now returned to the Monastery with his mind thoroughly poisoned by these stories, and breathing nothing but wrath and vengeance against me. By degrees he let out to members of the community all that he had heard about me at the General Chapter and at Mount Melleray; and to the great disgust of the community he now constantly spoke of me as of a man who was insane. Then his next move was to send for the doctor, to prove that the infirmities from which I was suffering were only imaginary or pretended, and to prove also that I was quite insane. Indeed, I have no reason to doubt that he believed all this after what he had heard at the General Chapter and at Mount Melleray, particularly as he was very much inclined to believe this sort of thing about every one except himself. The doctor, however, at once declared that I was suffering from the most serious heart troubles and nerve lesion possible, as well as from other grave infirmities, all brought on by the worry and overwork; and that there was nothing in the world wrong with my mind, but that I could not possibly live under the treatment to which I was being subjected.

In fact, he was astonished that I had resisted it so long; having to stop as I had the whole time in a room without heat of any kind, with biting frosty draughts coming up through the unceiled flooring, which had a large windy passage under; the room itself having also a very large window with a northern aspect; and it was so badly glazed and so ill-fitting that when the blizzards came, the snow was driven in through it, until there would often be half a foot deep of it on many parts of the floor. The severe frost and snow lasted from the middle of October to the end of March without intermission, the thermometer often registering several degrees below zero. During

the whole of that time, with the exception of one pair of woollen hose, I had not one particle of clothing except what I had worn through the excessive heat of the summer. I need not give the details, as anyone can easily imagine what this meant. In the night, however, I slept with others in a warm dormitory.

When the doctor visited me, he understood most of it, though I was not permitted to give any account of my room or details of my treatment. To prevent this I was brought into another comfortable, well-heated room, and supplied with warm overclothing for his visit; while the Procurator of the Monastery came in and prevented me telling him too many things that would be disagreeable. But the doctor told me that I could not live under the treatment I was getting as the cold had now become most intense and piercing. And when I told him that there was no hope of any change, "then," he said, "you must remain in bed."

One of the brethren offered me a warm ulster coat, thinking this might enable me to bear the cold of the room. But when I asked the Abbot for permission to use it he refused. And though there were many warm comfortable rooms unoccupied, and though he had said before going to the General Chapter, that I was to have one of these rooms in the winter, when I now asked him for one of them I got the same refusal; while the Abbot accompanied the refusal with the greatest possible abuse, telling me that I was mad, as they all knew at Mount Melleray, and that I must not think that I was sent to them to enjoy luxuries; that he was only acting according to the orders he had received; and that being a convicted criminal and a prisoner, I had no right to be treated like the other monks, for that if I had conducted myself aright in Ireland I would not be there.

In these circumstances I had no remedy but to follow the doctor's advice and remain in bed, except during the few hours that I spent every day in the church when it was heated. The other monks had warm comfortable rooms and an abundance, and to spare, of warm clothing suitable to the circumstances and the climate; but none of them dare share anything with me, which most of them would have willingly done and were anxious to do. Some of them expressed their deep indignation at the treatment I was receiving, and most indignantly remonstrated with the Abbot, but in vain. He had received his orders and would carry them out. Now to appreciate all this, the state of my health must be remembered. And moreover, owing to the cold and suffering, it was now with the greatest difficulty, and only with the aid of crutches, that even within doors I could at all move about.

I should, indeed, have preferred very much not to have mentioned

these things at all, only that it was necessary to do so in order to expose the treacherous and hypocritical dishonesty of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, declaring that they did not mean to punish me at all. In words, they pretended to be fair and generous, and can quote them in Rome to justify themselves; and then they have their agent carrying out their illegal, vindictive and cruel revenge, where they think that it cannot be detected. This has been their way all through; their words have been fair and plausible for the ears of the public, but their acts in secret and in the dark have been the acts of unscrupulous, revengeful vendettists.

It was, moreover, the unjust judge sentencing the innocent man to be hanged, and then claiming that the fault was not his but the hangman's. This, indeed, is the true meaning of their declaration, that they do not intend to punish me.

But there was still more. Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had, as we have seen, to declare that the Congregation had found me guiltless of every charge brought against me. This they did in private, because they had to do it. But then in public, by the false sentence they gave, they put the seal of the Holy See on the truth of every one of the stories and the calumnies and slanders my accusers had spread against me. Moreover, the moment the sentence was announced by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, an emissary from the General's Office was despatched from Rome to Ireland to spread the news of my conviction everywhere he went, in order to prove to the world that I was guilty. And then the women and girls that flocked after this emissary, who was the pretended doctor, scattered broadcast the story that in Rome I was found guilty and convicted of all they had spread about me. In the same way the party opposed to me, that had been so often and so glaringly convicted of doing the things of which they accused me, had, through the machinations of these men in Rome, got supreme control at Mount Melleray; and through every possible channel, particularly through the women who had to be excluded from the Monastery, but who were now all invited and brought back to it again, the same news was likewise circulated from the Monastery, namely, that I was found guilty of all in Rome, and that this was proved to the world by the fact that I had to leave the Monastery. Moreover, the convicted men at the Monastery were now placed again in positions, where they could say with perfect impunity whatever they pleased about me, and nothing that malice could suggest was left unsaid. Encouraged and protected from Rome, and with me locked up for life in prison, as they imagined, there was simply no restraint. I was again represented by themselves and their agents as convicted of everything that they had

ever said about me. It was now not merely a torrent but a deluge of calumnies and slanders, with the name and authority of Rome itself attached to them. Here, for example, is a letter forwarded to Rome, both to the General's Office and the Sacred Congregation; and it shows not only something of what was going on at Mount Melleray, but that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini and the Abbot-General and his office were kept well informed of it and, therefore, responsible for it all:

"I, Bartholomew O'Connell of Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland, hereby declare that I was a simply professed brother in the Monastery of Mount Melleray, Ireland.

"On or about September 4 of the present year, 1908, when I was about to leave the Monastery of Mount Melleray, Brother B., a lay brother there, told me that Father Isidore had been convicted of directly violating the Sacramental Seal of Confession. He also said that Father Isidore should have been in the lunatic asylum long before he left the Monastery.

"Another of the brethren, Father M., a few days before I left the Monastery at the end of September, told me that Father Isidore had been convicted of often beating women and young girls and children in the Secular Church of the Monastery when he was there. He had often told me that before.

"Both Brother B. and Father M. were most special friends of, and almost constantly in the room with, the new Abbot, and they had no leave to speak to me as they did without special permission from him to do so.

"Brother B. and Father M. when telling me these things before I left the Monastery expected that I would spread them outside. They thought, as I was only a lay brother and a novice during a part of the time, that I did not know the utter falsehood and malice of their statements. But knowing that what these two religious said about Father Isidore was false and totally without foundation, and that they maliciously intended me to spread it outside, I feel myself bound to make this declaration and attestation of the facts, and I am prepared to swear to the truth of this if the Sacred Congregation require it.

"(Signed) At New Melleray Abbey,

"Dubuque, Iowa, America,

"BARTHOLOMEW O'CONNELL."

There were hundreds of witnesses of the same kind, from almost every part of Ireland and outside it, to prove that after I left Mount

Melleray every one of the calumnies and slanders against me was renewed there, and their truths vouched for on the authority of the Holy See. All this was made known to them in Rome; but instead of putting a stop to it, they encouraged and shielded it in every way possible. So that, while declaring my innocence in private, they had their agents and accomplices publicly proclaiming my infamous guilt and conviction in order to cloak and shield their own wrongdoing.

IV

I MYSELF put the proofs of all these things before them in Rome. But what was the reply from Rome to all this that was still being practised against me at Mount Melleray and elsewhere? Why, a whole host of still more subtle and insidious calumnies from themselves, if that indeed were possible. For having me now locked up, they thought I could never defend myself, nor clear my character and expose their doings. Here, for example, is one of them. The Abbot of New Melleray received the following notification:

“Father Isidore remained for three days at Mount Melleray, beyond the eight days assigned him in our letter of May 27 within which he was commanded to leave it under pain of suspension, and he has thereby incurred suspension from saying Mass, and an irregularity *ex delicto* for presuming to do so. But we do not insist on the punishment being carried out.”

This notification was signed by Brother Bonaventure, Pro-Curator, by order of the Abbot-General and the Sacred Congregation.

Now, among the many untruths contained in this short note, there is one that bears on the very face of it for every one to see, the stamp and brand of wilful and deliberate falsehood. They say that they do not intend me to incur these punishments. But these punishments were *ipso facto* attached to the delinquency, if it ever existed, and if I were guilty they could no more stop me from having incurred them, than they could stop the water that had flowed down the Tiber six months before; and I would still in spite of the whole world be suspended and irregular, as every one with the least knowledge of Canon Law knows. This of itself shows clearly that the statement is a deliberate and malicious falsehood made in order to blacken my character, for he tells us that I am not suspended.

But in addition to this, every word of the note was false; and fortunately I have still the letters and the dated envelope proving this. Here are the letters:

“ROME.

May 27, 1905.

“To the Right Reverend Father M.

“My Reverend Father,

“To put an end to all tergiversation, objection or subterfuge on the subject of the last decision of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, of which I have sent you the original, dated May 16, 1908, by his Eminence Cardinal Ferrata in the case of Father Isidore, I declare hereby as follows:

“The prefixed time of eight days is now appointed, within which Father Isidore will have to leave Mount Melleray, to go to the Monastery of New Melleray under pain of incurring the penalties as decreed against him by the same Sacred Congregation; and this period of eight days will commence to count from the day when official notification of this my present letter will be given to Father Isidore.

“In consequence of this declaration, I pray you, Reverend Father, to give at the *very earliest opportunity possible* official notification of my decision to Father Isidore, if it be necessary. Accept Reverend Father, the homage of my religious attachment.

“✠F. AUGUSTINE MARRE,

“Abbot-General.”

Here is the second letter:

“MOUNT MELLERAY ABBEY.

“June 7, 1908.

“My dear Father Isidore,

“I send you herewith a copy of a letter I received from the Abbot-General on Sunday, May 31, a few hours after you had left. Being absent from home for the past few days, this is the first opportunity I have had of giving you official notice of its receipt. I am, my dear Father Isidore,

“Yours faithfully,

“ (Signed) M. P.”

On June 12 I received this last letter, and along with it the one signed or pretended to be signed by the Abbot-General. I have still, as already stated, the envelope and the two letters contained in it to prove this; so that, as seen from the dates, I had left Mount Melleray three weeks before the eight days expired, instead of three days after, as the Pro-Procurator's letter asserts. Therefore, all the statements in the Pro-Procurator's notification are false; and, as shown, the falsehood must have been deliberately intended to blacken my character.

This letter from Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini through the Pro-Procurator-General is then the most vicious piece of falsehood, perhaps, that we have come across in the whole business. Because by falsely saying that I had incurred suspension, by not leaving until three days after the time fixed for me, they thereby necessarily implied that for several months I had been deliberately saying Mass sacrilegiously, while under suspension and an irregularity *ex dilecto* for doing so; while any priest who would do this, must be a man without faith or religion; which was plainly the false stigma they now pretended to fix on me. And this was to be done without my ever being able to contradict it; for I was never to know anything about it, and never would have known anything only that the Abbot of New Melleray could not make out the obscure Latin and had to ask me to translate it for him, as I was somewhat experienced in such things.

V

AGAIN, that the letter which they pretended to have been written in Rome on May 27, by the Abbot-General is another clumsy and wretched forgery, like so many others that have gone before, is clearly manifest. There are many proofs of this, but I confine myself to two which will be easily comprehended by every reader.

That letter of May 27, if it were genuine, would have suspended me *ipso facto* from celebrating mass, if I had remained over the eight days at Mount Melleray, after receiving the notification which it contained; and I should have been *ipso facto* irregular, if I celebrated mass. *Ipso facto* means that the suspension would have been instantly and infallibly incurred by the very fact of my remaining in Ireland over the eight days; and no power on earth, or even in Heaven, could afterwards prevent me from having incurred that suspension, and that irregularity, by celebrating Mass when I was suspended; no more than it could now prevent me from having been born sixty-five years ago. But the note of the Pro-Procurator, written in the name and with the authority of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, to the Abbot of New Melleray, though it says that I did remain the three days over the eight days that are mentioned in the letter, which is pretended to be dated from Rome on May 27, and signed with the Abbot-General's name, yet says also that I am neither suspended nor irregular, though I was celebrating Mass the whole time. But that I am neither suspended nor irregular, after remaining three days over the eight assigned in the letter, can only be true because that letter of May 27 was not a true

and genuine one. There is no getting over this; it is quite as clear as that I never was killed, because I am still alive and writing these words. I must have been suspended and irregular if the letter were genuine; but he tells us that I am neither suspended nor irregular, therefore the letter cannot be genuine. This surely is another dilemma that cannot possibly be got over.

The other proof fully corroborates the fact that the letter, purporting to be signed and sent from Rome by the Abbot-General on May 27, and received at Mount Melleray on the 31st, is forged. And besides this it more thoroughly exposes the deceitful game they were playing, and shows how they were trying to do it. The letter given above, dated June 7, but posted late on the 8th—for the post does not leave Mount Melleray until quite late in the evening—says that the letter of May 27 reached Mount Melleray on Sunday the 31st, a few hours after I had left. But I did not leave Mount Melleray on that Sunday until the post had arrived and I had got my letters. Besides, I was to be notified of the contents of that letter of May 27 “at the very earliest possible opportunity.” Now the writer of the letter dated on June 7, but posted on the 8th, excuses himself for delaying so long, nine days, in sending me the notification of the supposed letter of May 27 from Rome, about which he was to notify me “at the very earliest opportunity,” by saying that he was away from home for some days. But he was not away from home until long after the post had arrived on Sunday, May 31. He does not indeed attempt to say that he was, because I knew the contrary and had a letter showing that he was at home. Why, then, did it take nine days to send it; particularly when he could have sent it from any place and knew where to send it, and was officially bound to send it “at the very earliest opportunity” according to themselves? And besides this—another proof that leaves no doubt in the matter possible—when he was away from home the duty and obligation of opening letters, and of fulfilling their official duties in such cases, devolves automatically, according to the Rules of the Order, on the person next in authority. Do all these facts not make it perfectly clear that the letter that pretends to be dated in Rome on May 27, and signed in the name of the Abbot-General, could not, and did not, come to Mount Melleray on Sunday the 31st? The fact is that the nine days gave them time to write to Rome and have a letter back after I had left on Sunday the 31st, and with two days to spare before they wrote at all, notifying me of having received the pretended letter of May 27.

Besides all this, as I had already left, there was no meaning in sending me the pretended letter of May 27, except for the purpose of

founding on it another charge, which we see they did. For the writer of that letter, signed in the name of the Abbot-General, says that notification of it is to be made to me, "if it be necessary." But it was not necessary, as I had already done all it pretended to require of me. They all knew perfectly well that if I had received that pretended letter of May 27 before leaving Mount Melleray, I would not have left at all, just as I did in 1904. Because to leave Mount Melleray then would have been to admit the genuineness of Cardinal Ferrata's and Monsignor Guistini's false sentence against me. The whole thing under another form was a repetition of Father Symphorian's false and forged sentences and orders and letters of June 28, 1904.

Now, to sum up this treacherous business, I left Mount Melleray on Sunday May 31; and by representing in Ireland that this letter of the 27th was a genuine one, and that it arrived at Mount Melleray on Sunday 31—not after, but before I left the Monastery—I was represented there as flying from it like a murderer, through the holy terror that this letter inspired in me; thus pleading guilty by my sudden flight to all the stories and vile calumnies that they had spread about me. By this version of the story in Ireland I was there made to bear false testimony of my own guilt and conviction. That tarred and blackened me thoroughly in the eyes of every one at Mount Melleray and in Ireland; and shut up for life in prison, four or five thousand miles away, I could not contradict a word of it.

Then in Rome and at New Melleray in America, by a still falser version, that is, by falsely representing me as remaining at Mount Melleray for three days over the eight, that were allowed me in the letter of May 27, as the Pro-Procurator's letter does, they represented me in both these places as suspended and irregular; and that, though I knew it, I continued to say Mass.

In this chapter, then, we have the Abbot-General and his Pro-Procurator-General, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, with the men at Mount Melleray and their agents, all heaping up false and slanderous proofs to show publicly that I am found guilty and convicted of the most heinous and detestable crimes, and that I must be the greatest and blackest of criminals and scoundrels; and we have them likewise heaping on me punishments upon punishments; all this being done to let the world see that I deserve it. Then we turn in the same breath to the Sacred Congregation, and all this time the same Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini are there privately protesting to myself that they declare me innocent, and do not intend to punish me and that, therefore, I have no right whatever to complain of what they are still doing to me and saying about me.

In fact, had we not such overwhelming evidence and such proofs of their conduct as we now see it, and have so often seen it before, the very enormity of the things they had done, and were still doing and saying, would have been their very best shield from detection and exposure, as long as they could carry on their system in such secrecy. For nobody could have ever imagined that such things could possibly be invented in any religious Order or in any of the Sacred Congregations in Rome. While having me now safely in prison, and likely to be soon in the grave, they felt secure that no knowledge of all this could ever leak out, particularly buried away as it was in such impenetrable darkness with so much rubbish piled over and around it.

CHAPTER XV

I

To live through the sufferings I was enduring at New Melleray, with such false and hideous slanders, spread everywhere and all round me, without being able to open my lips in vindication of my character and reputation, was a thing I could not continue to do. This was particularly so, as I was under no obligation whatever of doing it.

But there was another and equally strong reason that made it impossible for me to remain at New Melleray or to allow things to go on as they were. The late Abbot Carthage of Mount Melleray had died of a broken heart since I left Ireland; so I knew that all his papers had fallen into the hands of those whose interest it was to destroy them at once, in order to conceal their own deeds, and that of their accomplices in Rome, with regard to all that had occurred in the case both at Mount Melleray and in Rome. Before leaving Ireland, however, I had got from Abbot Carthage copies, and, in some cases, the originals, of many of the letters and documents bearing on my case. Besides these letters and documents of the Abbot, I had also many others of my own, fully establishing the case against them. These afforded superabundant and unanswerable proofs of the dishonest way in which things had been done, and were still being done, in Rome, and of the extent to which all truth and law and justice had been there perverted or trampled underfoot in the case. To send these letters to Rome by post or in any other way would only be putting them irrecoverably into the hands of those they proved guilty, and from past experience I knew well what that meant. They would simply be destroyed, and forged letters then put in their stead, just as was done before in 1904 and

1905, and as they were still doing. It became necessary, therefore, that I should go to Rome myself, if the thing could be at all effected, in order to get the whole truth, or as much of it as possible, before the Holy See. Then, if I could not get that done and things set right there, I would feel myself at perfect liberty to expose to the world the whole matter from beginning to end, in order to clear my character publicly, and if possible make it necessary that things should be put right.

II

I COULD not, however, during the terrible cold of the winter, leave the Monastery or do anything; for I was absolutely without money, and almost without clothing, and Dubuque, the nearest town, where I could hope for any relief, was fifteen miles distant. So that if I attempted the journey in such circumstances I must have inevitably perished before I got a third of the way. I had, therefore, to wait for the spring, and then I learned that the Abbot-General was coming to the Monastery of New Melleray; so I waited on to see if he might yet do anything to put things right, or, if not, to have at least proof that through him no remedy could be obtained. At first he would listen to nothing. There was to be nothing now but vengeance for the way he and his office had been exposed in Rome; trying at the same time to justify himself and his officials, until he found that I had still copies of the documents that proved the case against them up to the hilt. Then he tried to shift all the blame, and all the obligation of making redress, to the now suppressed Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. It was that Congregation, now, that had done it all, and as that Congregation had disappeared I might cry to the winds of Heaven for a remedy. This was the old game of 1904 and 1905 over again, trying once more to bury all the wrongs they had done, and all their false evidence and letters in the grave of the suppressed Congregation; just as before their detection and exposure in May, 1905, they had tried to do it with regard to the late Abbot-General.

In the end of June, 1909, I therefore left the Monastery of New Melleray penniless, to make my way with the assistance of some friends to Rome; where, passing through Ireland on my journey, I arrived almost twelve months later. I stopped for some time in Ireland, and while there I secured the fullest and clearest proofs of the fact that, at Mount Melleray, they were using the pretended sentence given by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini in March, 1908, to prove me convicted of the most infamous canonical

crimes, and of the most outrageous and atrocious conduct; and that from Mount Melleray they had their agents and emissaries everywhere spreading and propagating anew all the old false stories and calumnies of the past.

III

As soon as I arrived in Rome early in the month of May, 1910, I had an interview with Cardinal Vives, Prefect, and Monsignor Cherubini, Sub-Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Regulars. This was the new Congregation that had succeeded to the suppressed one of which the two men who had done me the great wrong had been Prefect and Secretary. With regard to my case, this new Congregation had all the jurisdiction and powers of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars which had been suppressed, and in whose name Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had, just before its suppression, done me all the wrong; for they had carefully timed their false blow, so as to disappear from the scene at once after giving it. But this new Congregation had also succeeded in such cases to the duties and obligations of the suppressed one, and as I, contrary to all their expectations, insisted on a full investigation of the case, the new Congregation could not altogether refuse it.

Cardinal Vives and Monsignor Cherubini, who up to this knew nothing about the strange circumstances of the case, both pledged themselves faithfully to myself, as well as to an eminent ecclesiastic in Rome—for knowing what I did about Roman promises, I took care to have proof of this—that the whole case would now be fully gone into; acknowledging at the same time that it was their official duty to do so. They had already taken the preliminary steps for carrying out this full investigation. But as soon as they discovered how deeply Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, and the Abbot-General and his office in Rome, had been involved in the whole dishonest and corrupt business, they shirked their obligations and shamefully violated the promises made to myself and to others.

When I pressed the case, however, Cardinal Vives himself could not attempt to allege any pretext or excuse for not examining the case fully, and doing me the justice to which he acknowledged I had a right. It was in a very special manner to remedy the wrongs done by, or in the name of, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars that his new Congregation had been established by the Pope, and that he was himself appointed to his present position. He could not, therefore, directly and openly shirk his official duties, or deny his obligations. But, then, instead of examining the case himself, or seeing

that it was effectually done, he put the case altogether into the hands of Monsignor Cherubini, the Sub-Secretary, who he told us would fully examine the whole case, and the documents and evidence pertaining to it, and then have full justice done me.

These were fine Roman promises indeed, but only promises, opening the way to more of the deceptive chicanery and dishonest red-tapeism of the past. Instead of doing as promised, the Sub-Secretary never made even an attempt to examine anything about the case, simply marking time to make it appear that he was doing so. Then when I and an important official in Rome reproached him with this deceitful shuffling between himself and Cardinal Vives, he had to admit that he had made no examination whatever; referring the matter now, under the pretence of being otherwise too busily engaged, to a still more subordinate official. And in his turn, this official again altogether shirked the business; first pretending that he had examined all the documents connected with the case, and that he could find nothing in them to justify me. But it was subsequently proved and admitted by himself that he had never read nor opened one of the documents, nor did he even know that the most important of them were there at all. I was afterwards present myself with him when most of them were opened for the first time. During the time that he had pretended to have been closeted in his room examining them, he was away, as we knew, and he had to admit, with an excursion party at the Passion Play at Oberammergau. This and the fact that he did not know that the documents were in his office was how he was caught.

Detected and having to admit this, after parleying and shuffling for two or three days, he now pretended that he was preparing to examine the whole documents and evidence, and that he would do it with myself and a lawyer on my part, and a representative from the General's Office on the other side, saying that this was what Cardinal Vives had ordered.

But suddenly changing his tactics again, as soon as he discovered that the evidence would infallibly convict the Roman officials, he declared that the matter had already been referred to a General meeting of the Congregation, which, he said, seeing that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had attached the "*Et amplius*" to the case, had decided that it could not be re-opened. The blame and responsibility was thus shifted now to all the cardinals; so that there were plenty of shoulders to bear it, and neither blame nor responsibility could be fixed on anyone in particular.

This is one of the recognized ways of playing their game, just as Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had done it in 1904 until

they were detected; and it certainly now looked like completely checkmating me. But, again, when enquiries were made from these cardinals, they denied all this, saying that they had never heard or known anything about the matter; nor attended any such general meeting as the one which, this official alleged, had given the decision. Cardinal Gennari pointed out, moreover, that, under their rules of procedure, this was a decision that the Cardinals of the Congregation could not give, because it pertained to Cardinal Vives alone, as Prefect, to remove the "*Et amplius*" and re-open the case. And Cardinal Vives had already been compelled to do this.

Detected once more, this official now proposed that I should appoint a lawyer, who would represent me at the investigation and that he would then alone with him make a full and complete examination of the case.

As a reason or excuse for examining the case with the lawyer alone and without my presence, he now alleged that there were some names of witnesses that he could not allow me to see. He made this allegation, though he was quite aware that I already knew the names of these pretended witnesses, for I had seen them in his own office and in his own presence. Yet I had to consent to his arrangement, for I was powerless to resist it.

But instead of leaving the selection of the lawyer to this official, as he had expected, or to anyone else, I insisted on employing a very high charactered and distinguished advocate, chosen by myself and my friends, who, I knew, would leave no stone unturned. When I had fully instructed the lawyer upon all the facts and details of the case, knowing now that the result must be a disastrous exposure and condemnation of the acts and conduct of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, and of the men in the General's Office, the examination and investigation was again shamefully and unblushingly shirked, and nothing would be done. The false plea now was that one cardinal could not oppose or condemn what another had done, nor one congregation sit in judgment on the acts and decisions of another; that it was only the congregation in whose name the decision had been given that could rescind it, and make amends for the wrong and injustice that had been done me. Of course, Cardinal Vives himself never put forward this false plea, for he dare not attempt to do such a thing, and had already himself decided otherwise. But his underling officials did it in his name, and there was now no remedy, for I could no longer approach himself.

Here the dishonest fallacy was that of making the suppressed and defunct Congregation of Bishops and Regulars a live and extant one still, and Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini its Prefect

and Secretary, whereas that Congregation was now morally dead and buried. And the new Congregation and Cardinal Vives and his officials, were they not in its place to do justice and judgment, irrespective of persons, or of their dignity and influence? And was this false plea not the same sort of fraudulent red-tapeism as when the new Abbot-General and Father Symphorian, before their conviction in May, 1905, sought to bury their own and their accomplices' misdeeds and the proofs of them in the grave of the late Abbot-General? Most certainly so. It was only the players and the mode of playing the game that were changed. And the dishonesty of their plea, like the rest of what went before it, was also manifest; for was it not the special duty and the bounden obligation of this new Congregation and its Prefect, as Cardinal Vives himself had admitted, to see, to examine and then to remedy to the full all the wrongs and injustices, unlawfully perpetrated in the case in the name of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars—the Congregation to which they had succeeded in order to do justice and judgment to all? Most undoubtedly that was so, and they could not deny it. It was for this very purpose that they had succeeded to the suppressed Congregation, to all its responsibilities and in its place. And that also was what the law of the Church, the eternal law of God's justice demanded, as well as the will of the Pope, which they were bound to carry out, and it was likewise what the duty and obligations of their office stringently required of them.

They knew this, and had to acknowledge it, yet they could not do it, they dare not attempt it. These new men were merely weak, nerveless figureheads, at the back of a tyrannical ring in the Roman curia, which was controlling everything there. This ring would not permit it, and they dare not attempt to oppose the ring. Monsignor Jannsens, a Belgian Benedictine, who had been for some time Secretary of the new Congregation, would not yield his conscience to that kind of thing, and he had to fly from Rome.

The fact is that the men in these Congregations in Rome, even those who might wish to be upright and honest, and who are desirous of doing what is right and just, are under the secret control and tyranny of that dominating caucus of selfish and unscrupulous permanent officials and others who stop at nothing. In fact, at the very time I speak of, they had *The Messagero*, one of the most scurrilous and unscrupulous daily papers in Rome or in Italy, constantly pouring out its filth and its venom on the venerable head of the Church, because he would not appoint Monsignor Guistini a cardinal after the exposures that had taken place with regard to his doings when Secretary of the Congregation which the Pope had had to suppress in

1908. The cry of this infidel paper—and one heard it echoed and re-echoed among the permanent officials of the Congregations—was, that Monsignor Guistini was a Roman who understood thoroughly the secret intricacies and workings of the Roman tribunals and Congregations; and that the Pope must not presume to bring in foreigners and appoint them cardinals over such men as he was, for that the Roman people would not tolerate such things. The threat, of course, was ridiculous; but after what we have seen Monsignor Guistini doing in the case, it shows the spirit that was being fomented and fostered, and that was working so much mischief in Rome and to the Church.* The one deep-rooted idea among Roman officials seems to be that it is not the laws of God and his Church, but their own selfish wills and their personal interest that must prevail in everything. In such circumstances, no justice or reparation could be hoped for from Cardinal Vives and his Sub-Secretary; and they hardly tried to make any secret of the fact that they dare not even attempt it. To think that a mere insignificant outsider could get justice or even a hearing, where Roman Cardinals and Monsignors were concerned, meant to the Roman official mind all that was inconceivable; it meant the Goths and Vandals threatening Rome again.

But there was a great deal more of this fraud practised and attempted in the case. Here is one astounding instance of what these subordinate officials endeavoured to do under my own eyes and with my own consent. I give it specially because it shows how they imagine that their only duty in such cases is to screen the guilt of their associates in Rome, and that they regard inexperienced outsiders, who have no influence there, as mere contemptible beings of an inferior order of whose rights no account whatever need be taken.

They made a distinction, admitting that there were irregularities and informalities and even illegalities and injustice in the decision which Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had pretended to have been given against me by the Sacred Congregation on March 14, 1908, and that this vitiated the decision. They further acknowledged, for they could not avoid it, that the declaration that I was innocent and that the Sacred Congregation did not intend to punish me rendered the sentence a legal impossibility. They would now correct and legalize these things that were so manifestly wrong, and which so clearly proved the whole case against Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini. They also blandly sought to obtain from me the original documents that proved these things, in order that they might do so, as if this were a great favour they were conferring upon me.

* Monsignor Guistini has since then been created a cardinal.

But they would do this without remedying and correcting any of the wrong and injustice done me, the clear proofs of which lay staring them in the face. They would, in fact, permit no examination whatever that would go to the real root of the evil, or into the disreputable conduct of the men at the Office of the Congregation and the General's Office, when they sentenced me as guilty, while compelled by overwhelming and unanswerable evidence to declare me innocent. This simply meant that they would now slyly and secretly drop the poison of guilt into my cup; which, after all the evidence proving my innocence, Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini dare not attempt to do openly on March 12, 1908.

This part of what these underling officials wanted to do was, therefore, the very same thing that Father Symphorian had been convicted of doing, when he interpolated the sentence of my guilt in the French translation of Cardinal Ferrata's and Monsignor Guistini's letter of June 25, 1904, and sought to imprison me for life under that false sentence. It was, moreover, an attempt to repeat what Abbot John so treacherously did, when, by false promises of returning them, he secured possession of my papers and carried them away with him in January, 1906.

But besides all this, and besides shielding and whitewashing the wrong-doers in Rome, this could and would have been made another way and another false means of appearing to prove my guilt, by making it appear that I could not now prove my innocence; and then concealing the fact that I would get no opportunity of doing it, though the proofs of it lay there staring them in the face. This was once more poisoning all the wells of justice at the very fountain head. And then we have heard, and now see for ourselves, that I was to have no remedy and no redress for all this, and for all the wrong and injustice we have seen.

IV

I NEXT visited the cardinals who had constituted the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars before its suppression, and who were, therefore, responsible for its acts, thinking that some justice might be obtained through them; for it was in their name and by their alleged authority that the wrong and injustice had been so unlawfully done me. But every one of them, either themselves or through their secretaries, protested that they never had anything to do with the case, denying that they had ever known anything about it, or that they had ever sanctioned, or in any way authorized, what Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had done against me on March 14, 1908; Cardinal

Vincent Vanutelli, for instance, declaring that for more than twelve years he had never gone near any of their meetings. But though they could not deny the glaring wrong and injustice done in their names, yet they all declared that one cardinal never dare oppose the acts of another, however wrong and unjust they might be; that it was only Cardinal Vives, into whose hands the case had been committed, who could do it, and was bound to do it. Here it was technicalities and formalities and court etiquette, that stood in the way of right and justice, while with Cardinal Vives it seemed to be terrorism and tyranny that literally trampled them underfoot; so that everywhere the result was the same. There was no remedy against anything that a Roman cardinal and a Roman monsignor might have done, no matter how wrongfully or vindictively they had done it, or how glaringly unjust or illegal it might be.

There was then only one other remedy remaining. This remaining remedy was a petition or supplication to the Pope to permit the case to go before the independent tribunal of the Signatura, that it might be there fully investigated and examined from the foundation. According to the Pope's own words, if ever there was a case where it was so, I had a full right to that examination of my case by this supreme tribunal, while every honest man in Rome who knew of the case—and there were hundreds who did—was jubilant at the certainty that I would now have an opportunity of exposing what was going on in secret in these Congregations, unknown to the Pope, as such things had never been exposed before; for they knew that I had the documents and the evidence to prove the rottenness and corruption that had long been festering there.

V

As I have had occasion to state before, I now employed a lawyer, the same that I had employed in 1907 and 1908, to make the petition or supplication to His Holiness. But Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, just as they had done at the trials of 1907 and 1908, again bound him on oath, as I have already shown, not to let the Pope know anything about my case or about their conduct in it; and he had to obey them, for he was otherwise subject to their jurisdiction. I employed a second lawyer, and they could not bind him, for he was independent of them. But when he sent the petition, instead of being forwarded to the Pope, it was sent back into the hands of the men against whom it was made, without the Pope ever knowing anything about the contents of it.

Again, when I forwarded to the Pope, through one of his own

chamberlains—for they made it utterly impossible for me to obtain any audience whatever with the Pope myself—the petition and supplication, setting forth along with them the grounds of my appeal, as prepared for me by the lawyer, I got from the Pope's own Secretary two days after, when I called at his office at the Vatican, the reply that His Holiness had graciously received and examined my petition and the grounds of my appeal, but could not allow any such appeal to the tribunal of the Rota. Only a few minutes after this, however, the letter containing my petition and the grounds of my appeal was handed back to me by the same chamberlain to whom I had given it. It was unopened and unsealed, the chamberlain saying that it had never gone near the Pope at all, nor out of his own possession; for that he had had no opportunity of delivering it to His Holiness. Here we have, with regard to the Pope himself, exactly what Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had done in 1904 with regard to the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, when they intercepted the Bishop of Waterford's genuine letter and report, and used instead their own forged one in the Bishop's name. That the petition and the statement of my grounds of appeal never reached the Pope was, of course, manifest and clear; while, from the statement of the Pope's own Secretary, it was equally so that a false document purporting to be that very petition and statement of my grounds of appeal had been put before him and palmed off on him as mine, in order to deceive the Pope into rejecting the petition and appeal; so that, turn where we will, we find in the case nothing but the most disreputable dishonesty, deceit and treachery. Their laws and rules and procedure as seen in books, are all fair and comely to the public eye; but unless you have money and influence in practice, you soon find that they are only like the Dead Sea fruit.

It was now plain and manifest that with this ring of corruptionists in the Roman curia working as they were, and closing every avenue to justice, no reparation for the wrong done me, nor any justice whatever could be obtained. Nor dare anyone now who might approach the Pope, attempt to put before him the truth of what was going on; because, as every one in Rome at least believed, before twenty-four hours the whole corrupt party would know it, and know who did it; such was the system of espionage and intimidation that they had now perfected and at work. And the man who did it might prepare to leave Rome at once, and to suffer persecution wherever he might go, just as Abbot Carthage of Mount Melleray had to suffer for it, after getting this done, as we have seen, in 1904. The threats and menaces to him in the Procurator's letter of November 24, 1904, makes this

quite clear, and there are many other proofs of it. Moreover, as far as this combined party in the Roman curia could reach, not only Abbot Carthage, but every one in and around Rome who had been suspected of assisting him to get it done had to suffer the same kind of threats and persecution.

Over and over again, inch by inch, and by many roads and in many ways, we have traced the whole evil, and the cause and origin of it all to Rome and the Roman Congregations, just as Abbot Eugene did it for us in his letter of May 12, 1901. For the present, then, we leave it there.

CONCLUSION

I

To recapitulate the vast mass of evidence we have been obliged to produce in order to unravel the entanglements, and elucidate and prove our case in its various phases, would be impossible. Fortunately, however, it is not necessary to do so. This mass of detailed evidence was required so long only as the case was still proceeding, and not yet decided. Because the result at every stage of the proceedings not only summed up that evidence, but proved its undoubted and indubitable truth and its overwhelming force.

For instance, Abbot Eugene's official report on June 12, 1901, of his previous investigations, declaring me completely innocent, and that it was my false accusers and calumniators that were guilty; the declaration of my proved innocence which Father Symphorian had so reluctantly to make in 1904 to the Assessor of the Holy Office in the name of the late Abbot-General and on the authority of all the searching investigations held at Mount Melleray; the Bishop's report on July 31, 1906, of his sworn enquiry, and his further report on December 29 of the same year, in both of which he declared me innocent of all the charges brought against me, and furthermore that he could do nothing else but make that declaration of my innocence after the sworn testimony of so many witnesses proving me to be so—all these fully established our whole case and all that we have written as far as the proceedings at Mount Melleray are concerned. And nobody can possibly go behind these decisions and declarations.

In the same way the rescindment on May 10, 1905, proved the glaring and unscrupulous falsehood and malignity of all that was contained in Father Symphorian's letter of June 28, and of all and every line that he himself and the new Abbot-General and Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini had written in confirmation of the contents of that false letter. Therefore, there is no occasion for recapitulating the overwhelming mass of irrefuted evidence by which we had already proved the same things. The Tribunal of the Sacred Congregation has done all this for us in its rescindment.

Similarly the French Abbots of the General Chapter in September, 1906, had to annul the sentence of condemnation they passed against me without even pretence of trial, charge or evidence, and without my knowing anything about it. And on the same occasion in 1906, when confronted with the evidence that proved it, Abbot John had

to admit, and thereby prove for us, the infamy of all that he and his interpreter had so wrongfully done and attempted at the Inquisition at Mount Melleray, in the January previous. It is, therefore, no longer necessary to show once more how overwhelmingly we had already proved all this both against the French Abbots and against Abbot John and his interpreter, for they have fully admitted and proved it themselves.

Again, the whole of the atrocious charges and statements that we saw contained in the secret letter of the Abbot's lawyer, as well as the nine charges in the pretended summary supplied by Monsignor Guistini in December, 1907, had every one been already proved to be outrageously false and malicious, and declared to be so by every possible authority and tribunal, monastic and ecclesiastic, from the lowest to the very highest, and even by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini themselves. The mass of evidence, therefore, by which we again refuted them all was only necessary in order to elucidate and expose their unscrupulous conduct and their treacherous campaign of revenge. At the same time their having to withdraw the charges, and the evidence that proved their falsehood and malice in order to conceal all this, as well as the declaration they were compelled to make that they did not intend to punish me or declare me in any way guilty of anything whatever, proves all this out of their own authorized words and their own acts. While the sentence contained in their document of March 14, 1908, and the manner in which they sought to execute it against me, proves without any further words of ours the lawless and unrestrained malignity with which they were actuated.

Then the malign significance of their threat in March, 1908, that though I was innocent, and though they had no power to punish me, yet there was no remedy for me against all the lawless wrong and cruel injustice they were inflicting on me, was proved in Rome in 1910, when they closed against me every avenue to redress and justice, and particularly when they bound on oath my lawyer, Count Sacconi, who was a Count of the Papal Court, not to let the Pope know anything about the case, and prevented otherwise even one word of the truth from getting to His Holiness through any source whatever.

Therefore, in addition to all the rest of what we have seen, every item at every stage of the case is proved against them in Rome by the incontrovertible evidence of their own writings and their own acts, and by that of their agents and representatives. It consequently cannot be questioned by anybody.

II

It would, however, be a useless task to attempt to mete out here in exact measure their respective shares of guilt to the various actors in the many phases of this perfidious business. Indeed, for many reasons, the guilt of some of them seems to be beyond all measure. Besides, though often operating in spheres so far apart, their acts and the effect of them blend so much into each other that it would be utterly impossible to make distinctions and differences, and to draw exact lines of demarcation with regard to their respective responsibilities and guilt.

For example, all that we saw done at Mount Melleray, as detailed in the earlier chapters, could not have gone on there for one week after their detection, but for the way in which the disturbers were supported and encouraged from Rome. This we can easily see for ourselves from the narrative, and in a particular manner from Abbot Eugene's letter of June 10, 1901. Abbot Eugene tells us this quite plainly. The Abbot of Mount Melleray proves it. In the same way they never could have done what they did, either at the General Chapter of the Order in France, or at the Sacred Congregation and the General's Office in Rome, only that they had their distributing agents at work in Mount Melleray. This is clearly seen from the fact that it was by convicting their agents and accomplices at Mount Melleray that we were enabled to convict also Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, as well as Father Symphorian and the Abbot-General, in 1904 and 1905, with regard to all their forgeries in Rome; and to completely paralyse the French Abbots of the General Chapter, when to screen the men in Rome, without charge or evidence, they sought in their Star Chamber conclave of 1905 to convict and punish me unheard and undefended; and this even after my innocence had been so often and so completely vindicated, and the guilt and criminality of my false accusers and calumniators so fully established. So that, by the law of solidarity, these men must all in some respects be held morally guilty of, and responsible for, each other's acts; because throughout they were all combining and co-operating in the same evil work and for the same evil end.

Similarly after his false letter of June 28, 1904, fell into the hands of the Abbot of Mount Melleray, Father Symphorian could not have saved himself for one single hour, from complete exposure and instant conviction for his forgeries, and for the many other felonies he was guilty of, only that he was shielded and protected in all he did by Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, and afterwards by

the new Abbot-General. While at the same time he, by his false translation of their letter of June 28 and by the treacherous use he made of it, enabled Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini to do with impunity their share of the evil work in secret and in the dark, until our detective got behind the screens in Rome and detected them at it and convicted them of it. So that, as in the former case, here we again see the same co-operation and complicity with the same guilt all round; and how unscrupulously and unpardonable the whole of that guilt was we have already seen in the narrative.

In like manner we have seen that the Inquisitor and his Secretary in January, 1906, were the agents of the French Abbots of the General Chapter and, more particularly, of Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini, wilfully forging and most deliberately falsifying the evidence for them, while enkindling and inflaming all sorts of ill-feeling and bad passions at the Monastery in order to screen and shield their guilt in Rome, and their conviction there, and also to enable them to have their revenge for it. And then we have seen how, at the trials in Rome in 1907 and 1908, they in turn were there wilfully endeavouring, until detected, to screen the Inquisitor's guilt and that of his Secretary, and to use in secret all their forged evidence as they knew it to be; while binding the lawyer and all concerned under oaths of secrecy about it, and feloniously withdrawing the evidence that proved the falsehood of this evidence as well as their own guilt and that of their agents and accomplices. together with the evidence which, on the other hand, completely exculpated me and established my innocence, as we afterwards compelled them to admit.

Down to the very close of the case, therefore, we have seen the same treacherous and unscrupulous co-operations, every new phase revealing still meaner, more treacherous, and more unblushing guilt and infamy; while the sum total of that guilt and infamy must be measured not by one or two, or by any limited number of these acts, but by the huge accumulation of all that we have seen done from the beginning to the end.

Now, whatever may be said about the rest of those concerned, or however guiltless some of them may have actually been with regard to many of the things that were done, it is plain and manifest to every one that Cardinal Ferrata and Monsignor Guistini must be held fully responsible for all the wrong that was perpetrated; because, in addition to their own guilty part in the business they, as we have seen, knew it all, and none of it could have gone on even for one week after detection, only for their criminal complicity and their guilty connivance in what they were officially bound to correct and punish. While their official responsibility, the unlimited power they

exercised, and the high positions they occupied—positions in which in theory no wrong is ever supposed to exist, and against which, when the wrong is done, there is now in practice no earthly redress—makes the guilt and tyranny of their conduct criminal and detestable beyond the power of expression.

No tyranny, in fact, could be more so; for in addition to its wrongs and injustice otherwise, it is deliberately designed to destroy the peace of mind and conscience, as well as to ruin the reputation and character of its helpless victims. Nor as things are at present in Rome, owing to the unscrupulous ring that dominates everything there, and the impossibility of approaching the Pope either by letter or in person, is there any remedy for this either civil or religious—none whatever. This indeed is their own boast, for it is the true meaning of the false cries of “obedience without remedy” which throughout the whole case we have heard so much of from them all in Rome, and heard it most loudly proclaimed when their guilt was most manifestly proved; it is the meaning also of their threats and menaces about our daring to think of writing to the Pope. It is, therefore, not only a cruel and unjust tyranny, but also a lawless and sacrilegious one.

III

PASSING, then, for the moment, over the enormity of the rest of what we have seen, the great importance of this case lies in the revelation it makes—as perhaps it has never before been so fully done—of how, at the present day, such things are being constantly perpetrated with impunity by these officials in high places in Rome, and of how much that is truly contemptible and lawless lurks behind this system that is supposed to partake of the Divine; and that is held by Roman Catholics to be so *sacred and incorruptible*. It is the very worst spirit of selfish worldliness operating through the human element in God’s Kingdom and Church on earth, and pretending that it, too, is divine and that, therefore, it must be just and right and obeyed in all things, no matter how unlawful and unjust, or how irreligious and criminal they may be seen and proved to be. In this respect the whole thing is indeed as absurd and ridiculous as it is criminal, lawless and irreligious.

All this is seen in the present case, and it is clearly seen also how this destructive canker-worm of unrestrained and unrighteous worldly selfishness, nestling at the very heart and centre of Christianity, though it can never touch what is divine in the Church, spreads destruction through its very vitals, in so far as they are human even

to its remotest limits. For here we find its most pernicious and deadly effects at Mount Melleray, and we have traced every one of them back to their real cause and origin in Rome.

This great evil, then, surpasses all calculation. It has, indeed, a sad tale of ruin to its account, in so much open infidelity among the masses of the people in almost every Catholic country in Europe. I have lived many years on the Continent, and know most of these countries pretty well—some of them almost as well as I know my own; and far beyond what one reads from time to time in the public press, which only gives a very faint idea of the reality, what one hears about this from Christian men in these countries, and sees everywhere with his own eyes, is truly appalling. The reason of this is plain, because the great bulwark of religious belief in the Roman Catholic Church lies in the firm faith of every one of its members in the Spirit of God guiding and protecting the Church in things spiritual. But when these men in high places in Rome falsely do these things in the name of the Church, and as they would make it appear under its divine and authoritative guidance, is it any wonder that the faith of the poor people too often totters and in the end fails?

LEITCHWORTH : AT THE ARDEN PRESS



THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THE FOLLOWING
LETTERS IS GIVEN IN THE TEXT

Copie

M. D. de Melleray, 6. 12 Juin 1901

au Révérendissim
Abbi- General
Dom Benoit

10 1178 12
Mon Révérendissime Père

Le Rév. Père de M. Melleray (France) par une lettre
du 7 Juin, me communiqua les 2 lettres qu'il a reçues
de votre bon Procureur général Dom Benoit le 25 Avril
et le 8 Mai, au sujet des désobéissances faites contre
son Père Isidore, et sa tolérance à l'égard de ce
Père Confesseur. — Il n'y a rien de nouveau
pour moi dans ces accusations, qui sont absolument
les mêmes que celles qui ont été formulées par les
mêmes individus, il y a deux ans dans des lettres a
dressées à Rome, que votre Paternité m'a communiquées
pour que je m'occupe de ces affaires comme Père
immédiat) — et à Melleray, où on me suppliait
de venir faire la visite au plus tôt, afin de juger les
choses sur place. Dans l'une de ces lettres, le P. Joseph,
principal auteur de ce soulèvement contre le Père
Isidore, le P. Joseph, dit qu'il connaît Rome et les
Congrégations romaines, menaçait d'en faire tant,
de revenir si souvent à la charge, et d'être si

important, qu'à la fin les juges dont il provoquer
la sentence, lassés de ses obsessions, lui ~~se considéraient~~ ^{accorderaient}
l'éloignement ou l'interdiction du P. Lidoie pour
avoir la paix. — Or j'ai fait la visite, j'ai
entendu les parties; le Père Lidoie ~~est~~ ^{est} qui m'ac-
compagnait et qui connaît le P. Joseph, son ancien compa-
gnon à la prison de Rome, a pu juger comme moi;
et tous deux nous avons jugé que les accusations du
P. Joseph d'abord, du P. Athanasius ~~ancien~~ ^{ancien} Pissac du
M^t St Joseph et qui a vécu plusieurs années en Amérique,
et de plusieurs autres inspirés par ces deux Pères, ne tenaient
pas debout. Nous n'avons trouvé que des assertions
gratuites, sans preuves, dont l'explication se portait des
termes mêmes que nous inspirait pas la charité, mais
plutôt la jalousie et le dépit, etc. Donc nous avons
conclu qu'il fallait maintenir le P. Lidoie au confes-
sionnal, et qu'il fallait plutôt sacrifier le Père Jo-
seph qui est lui-même l'auteur du trouble dont il se
plaint. Le Rev^d Dom ne peut pas faire ce que je lui
conseillais, et voilà pourquoi la malice continue et
la guerre éclate de nouveau. — Le très Rév^d Père
Dom Berat ~~comme~~ ^{comme} qu'on interdise le P. Lidoie; et
il répond: "C'est vrai qu'il se conduit de la manière
qu'on veut de Dieu", et encore: "Si vous ne le faites pas,
la Congrég. pourrait vous y forcer par son Regu,
si les accusations sont vraies." — "Et bien! je dis que

5 si le Rév^d Sec^r fait ce qui lui est conseillé, il fera
à mon sens (je ne suis pas infallible) un acte d'injus-
tice, contraire au bien des âmes, et donnera raison
à de mauvaises passions qu'il faudrait réprimer
au lieu de les troubler. Après cet acte, le Rév^d Sec^r
ne s'en trouvera pas mieux, et sa conces-
sion ne lui attirera pas l'estime de ceux qui le lui
auront rendue. — Je conseille au contraire, puis-
que le P. Jorin (le P. Elthamare) demandant
une enquête de l'Evêque, d'accepter cette interven-
tion de l'Ordinaire, car je suis persuadé que
cette enquête terminera à l'honneur du P. Jorin
que j'ai jugé bon et saint prêtre dans sa conduite
au confessionnal. Mais je demande à ce que les
calommateurs, convaincus, comme ils l'ont été à la
visite, où ils ont vu au Directeur les preuves rai-
sonnables de leurs accusations, d'avoir cédé à la jama-
isont punis exemplairement, afin qu'ils ne puis-
sent pas dire: "Nous voulons calomnier; si ça prend,
nous aurons gain de cause; si ça ne prend pas,
nous ne nous en porterons pas plus mal." Finis-
sur ce point. C'est à ma connaissance, de ces af-
faires semblables à celle-ci. Des dénonciations de
la conduite de l'Abbé ont été portées à Rome à
la S. Congrég. des Evêq. et Rég. (l'un de ces Abbés
était votre Directeur, l'autre l'Abbé d'Alençon).

23
Les deux ont été reconnues fausses après en-
quête; et on s'est contenté de leur écrire
diffamatoires au pénal. Il faudrait faire
comme au régiment: Vous accusez, vous
~~denoncez~~ et si l'on est vrai, c'est bon, on
y apportera remède; mais si la chose est
fautive, vous serez punis, pour que vous
n'ayez pas l'œuvre de recommencer.

7
Signé: M. Eugène
abbé de Melleray

PAX
ORDRE
des
CISTERCIENS RÉFORMÉS

MAISON GÉNÉRALE
Via S. Giovanni in Laterano, 95

ROME

+
2 May 1907.
----- Notre Révérend Père D. Carthage
Delany, Abbé de Mont-Melleray

Notre Révérend Père,

La S. Congrégation des Evêques et Réguliers
vient de recevoir la lettre suivante.

Je vous la communique en la transcrivant

mot pour mot

Ex Secretaria S. Congregationis

Episcoporum et Regularium

6752
16

Respectuelement,

« Ex Decreto hujus S. Congregationis
« Contrasteria de S. Iudoro Mooney et de
« Abbate D. Delaney, Monachis Cisterciensibus
« Reformatis, proponitur coram plenario

" Emorum Patrum coetu. Paternitas
" tua de hoc partes commonefaciat
" eisque constituat triginta dierum
" spatium ad deducenda, si velint,
" ulteriora jura sua. "

" Interea omnia fausta tibi
" a Domino adprecor "

" Paternitati tuae

" Romae 27 Febr 1907 "

" Adversus "

Reverendissimo

Procuratori Generali

J. Card. Ferrata Praef.

Asteriensium Reformatorem

R. Guistini secret.

Ferrat refectere nuntium

Concordat cum originali

V. M. Benedictus Chambon

46. Loc. 1/10. Oct 1907

1
Pour obéir à la Congrégation, je
vous donne avis donc, mon très
Révérend Père, que l'Assemblée de
Eminente sœur s'occupera de votre
affaire et que vous avez trente
jours pour soumettre ultéri-
eurement vos droits, si vous le

voulez. Veuillez agréer, mon très
Révérend Père, l'hommage de mes
sentiments respectueux et
paternels en N. S.

J. M. Benoit Chambon

H. Tr. Gal. v. C. R.

Scrittura
della

A Congregazione

di vescovi e Reptare

Anno 1 abbate gli de Cisterciensi Reformati

N. 6752
16

N. 1000 Abbate. Nell'Adunanza Generale
del 14 marzo 1908 essendo stata proposta la causa
ordinis Cisterciensis Reformatum - translationis -
gli Emi Padri di questa S. Congregazione al dubio.

Se e come il P. Sordani debba essere trasferito
ad altro monastero da quello di Mont Mellay.

Risposero:

Affermativè et amplius.

Resti incaricata la S. O. a partecipare la
relativa istruzione al predetto Padre, e a far
sì che la surriferita decisime della S. Congre
abbia la dovuta esecuzione.

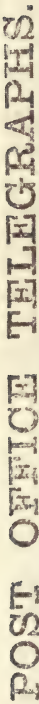
L. La auguro da Dio ogni bene
della S. O.

Roma 16 Mayo 1908

Come Fratello
D. Card. Ferrata, Presid.

Per copie conforme
+ J. Respentinio de C.
Abbe General

J. Guistini Segno



Office Stamp.

MR 2608

Charges	to pay
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Handed	26	at	5.58	Received	6.25
in at	Rome		6 pm	here at	7

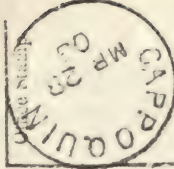
TO { Father Theodore Mount Mellera
Attorney at Law
Attending Letter Paris Denain Sacconi

W.B.—This Form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this Telegram.

Telegram from Count Sacconi, Fr. Mooney's lawyer in Rome.

POST OFFICE THE GRAPES.

18



1. The Bureau of ex. files. This can do this, because, he may have it reported as payment of half the balance on new trading of the new tax being received as 24; and if it is found that there was any such payment, the Bureau will be notified. Several other issues are at least to the reputation of Post Office inspectors.

REVUE
GÉNÉRALE

三

Roma 28 5.55 pm^{at} $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Hence} \\ \text{and} \end{array} \right\} \text{at } 24/10 \text{ derived } 5.52\frac{1}{4}$

TO

Father Isidore Mountrillay, Abbot
Lashburne.

Congregation n. a. pas entendu
 & vous punir on vous declarer
 coupable de l'assassinat, pro bono
 pacis rien a faire necessary
 obier selon.

Copy

+

Rome 27 Mai 1908

Au G. R. P. Dom Maur
Abbe' élu de
Mont Melleray.

Mon Révérend Père

Pour parer à toute tergiversation, objection
ou subterfuge au sujet de la dernière de-
cision de la Sacrée Congregation des Evêques
et Réguliers, dont je vous ai envoyé l'origin-
al daté du 16 Mai 1908, et signé par son Em-
inence le Cardinal Ferrata, dans l'affaire
du P. Isidore, je déclare, si besoin est, que

*Letter from Abbot-General F. Augustine Marre ordering sentence against
Fr. Mooney to be executed within eight days.
(See also the two following pages.)*

le temps peremptoire des huit jours dans les-
quels ~~ce~~ même P. Isidore devra avoir quitté
Mont-Melleray pour se rendre au Monastère
de Nouvelle-Melleray, sous peine d'en courir
la peine portée par la même sacrée Congre-
gation, commencera à courir du jour où il
sera donné notification officielle de ma pré-
sente lettre au P. Isidore.

En conséquence de cette déclaration je
vous prie, mon Reverend Père, de donner offi-
ciellement connaissance de ma décision, si
cela est nécessaire, le plus tôt qu'il vous
sera possible au P. Isidore.

Daignez agréer

Mon Reverend Père

L'hommage de mon religieux dévouement

eur. P.

+ F. Augustin Marre
abbé général.

This is a true copy of
the original

R. Maurus Philan
Abt.

June 7th 1908.

My dear F. L. Stone,

I send you here with a
Copy of a letter I received from
the Abol General on Sunday
the 31st May a few hours after
you had left.

Being absent from home
for the past few days this
is the first opportunity

I have had of giving you
official notice of its receipt.

~~I am~~ My dear F. D. D.

Yours faithfully in V^t.

R. M. Andrews

at



MOONEY, ISIDORE B

BQX

AUTHOR

2257

Monastic politics

.M66

TITLE and Roman procedure

MOONEY, ISIDORE B

BQX

2257

.M66

Monastic politics and Roman
procedure

